A Brief and Seasonable Word, offered to the view and consideration of the Saints and people of God in this generation, relating to the work of the present age, or generation we live in.

Wherein is shewed,

1. What *Generation Work* is, and how it differs from other workes.
2. That *Saints* in the several generations they have lived in, have had the proper generation workes of their generations.
3. That it is a thing of very great concernment for a Saint to attend to, and be industrious in the worke of his generation.
4. Wherein doth the work of the *present generation* lye.
5. How *each one* in particular may finde out that part or parcell of it, that is properly his *worke* in his generation.
6. How *generation worke* may be so carried on, as that God may be served in the *generation*.

By JOHN TILLINGHAST, *an unworthy Minister of the Gospel at Taunch in Norfolke.*

Gen. 6. 9. Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generations.

XUM

TO THE SUPREAME AUTHORITIE the *Parliament* of the Common-wealth of *England*.

RIGHT HONOURABLE;

AS the Lord *Jehovah* when he first chose *Israel* to be a peculiar people to himselfe out of all the Nations of the world, did give unto them righteous Judges, *Moses*, *Joshua*, *Gideon*, *Sampson*, *Samuel*, &c. such as were after his own heart, and of his own raysing up: So is it his promise to his people in the last dayes (before the drosse of [illegible] shall be taken away, and her tin purged, and shee called the City of Righteousnes, the faithfull City) [illegible]

will reſtore their Judges as AT THE FIRST, and their Counſellours as AT THE BEGINNING, *Iſai.* 1. 25, 26.

How high the faith and expectations of Gods people of late yeares have been as to the accompliſhment of theſe things is knowne to many, and what unceſſant prayers have been put up to the Throne of grace for the ſame is beſt knowne to the Lord. That you are rayſed up this day to be *the repairers of our breaches*, and *the reſtorers of paths to dwell in*, is (we hope) the long expected and much looked for fruit of this our faith and prayer; which as it doth cauſe rejoycing within many hearts, ſo hath it fixed the eyes of moſt upon you to obſerve what great thing that is which God by you is about to do for his poore people.

Not to teach you (Right Honourable) what is your worke, but to declare what that is which the Lord in the age we live in is about to do, and expects his people ſhould eye and follow him in, is the deſigne of this little

Treatiſe,

Treatiſe, which although it had its conception ſome moneths ſince, and was then deſigned for other hands, yet could it not be brought forth untill this day in which it caſts it ſelfe into yours, not ſo much ſeeking Protection (for what is truth will ſtand of it ſelfe, and what is not ſhall fall, though by men protected) as that it might heereby become the more ſerviceable to that great intereſt it pleads for, in doing of which the Author hath obtained whatſoever is heerein his end, deſire, or joy.

And now (Right Honourable) God having rayſed you up, and put into your hands ſo great an opportunity, let not the ſame be loſt for want of any improvement which may be made thereof: this is your day to honour God, and ſerve your generation, let this day ſlip, and it may be hereafter when you would do the thing, you ſhall not have a day to do it. Men, wiſemen, Good men have fallen before you by putting of, and neglecting the

worke of their generation, take heed leſt yee alſo fall through the ſame example of neglect; THE MORE EMINENT GODS HAND HATH APPEARED IN RAYSING OF YOU, THE MORE NAKED AND REMARKABLE WILL IT BE IN THROWING OF YOU DOWN, IN CASE YOU FAIL HIM AS OTHERS BEFORE YOU HAVE DONE. But I am perſwaded better things of you (Right Honourable) and things that accompany diligence, though I am bold thus to ſpeake: For ſurely the Lord who in an extraordinary way hath brought you together, hath ſome worke more then ordinary to do by you; wherein if you ſhall obſerve, making it your buſines to follow him, *Doing juſtly, releiving the oppreſſed, helping the fatherleſſe, pleading the cauſe of the widdow*, and *walking humbly before him*, though the Nations may ruſh againſt you, as the ruſhing of many waters, yet the Lord will rebuke them, and you ſhall be as a

burden-

burdenſome ſtone to all your Enemies round about, who ſhall weary themſelves with you, though all the people of the Earth ſhould be gathered together againſt you, for behold the day is comming in which the hand of the Lord ſhall be knowne towards his people, and his indignation towards his Enemies, which when you ſhall ſee, your hearts ſhall rejoyce, and your bones ſhall flouriſh like an herbe, and your tongues ſhall ſpeake and ſay, *Lo this is our God, wee have waited for him, wee will be glad and rejoyce in his Salvation:* and when the light of this day is come, and the glory of the Lord ſhall be riſen upon you, it ſhall then never repent you, that you have put your hands (though with your lives in them) to the worke of Chriſt, but whatſoever you have herein done or ſuffered, ſhall now be your glory, joy, and Crowne of rejoycing, which that you may at this day from Chriſt obtaine, and in the meane time be fa[illegible]

full in his worke, he ſhall continue to pray for, who is

July 8. 1653. *Your* Honors *humble and unworthy Servant,*

JOHN TILLINGHAST.

To the Saints and people of God in *England* (Children of the same Father, Members of the same body, partakers of the same Spirit, having the same hope) Grace and peace be multiplyed.

Dearly beloved in the Lord. It is not many yeares since that this poore Nation, and you in the same did sigh and groan by reason of that bondage both Civill and Spirituall which we were in to the wills of Tyrannicall unjust oppressors, and the superstitious innovations and injunctions of Antichristian Taskmasters. What your feares and prayers, yea resolutions to do for God, in case of deliverance were at this time, the casting your eye a few yeares back againe, and taking a view of the state of things without, according as the wheele did then move, and the frame and carriage of your Soules within under all, will better remember you of then I can tell you. How suitable the spirits and actings of many of you who in this day were Gods remembrancers, and Sions mourners, have since the time God hath cast off the heavie yoke, and broken the bonds of our oppressing persecutors been to your past prayers and resolutions, I feare (and yet I hope) when the violence of your distemper shall be over, and you so far recovered as to weigh things in the

ballances

ballances of righteousnes, love, and impartialitie, not so much others as your selves, will discerne, and first condemne. Jerusalem *of old expected and waited for* the comming of their Messiah, or Christ their King, *yet no sooner is newes abroad of his being born into the world, but upon the account of a meere worldly interest (* viz. *feare of tumults and commotions which might hereupon arise betwixt* Herod *the usurper, and this King, to the embroiling of them in wars who now were in quiet, enjoying their wealth in peace) they are* troubled *at it,* Matth. 2. 3. *I wish a worldly interest may have no such effect now as to beget trouble in the Spirits of any, at the comming forth of that mercy which time was they both prayed and waited for. Surely as it savours of great ingratitude towards our most gratious Father to call mercies given in as an answer of former prayers by the name of Judgements, so also of no lesse sloath and negligence when the glorious arme of God hath been made bare in working wonders for his people, for them to sit still, doing little, or nothing for him. That nothing done of late yeares comes as an answer of those prayers put up whilst we were in the house of bondage, none of you will or can deny: If any thing else be wrought which then we prayed not for, it is either a* superabounding of *mercy, beyond what then we were able to aske or thinke, or a* triall of our faith: *If a* superabounding of mercy, *shall we quarrell with God*

and

and one another for that? and if a triall *of our faith, shall we thinke that strange which hath been the ordinary way of Gods dispensations towards his in all ages, when he gives forth mercy, then to try their faith, and like a company of sullen Children shall we wrangle with our Father, and in a humor some fit throw away our bread, because the Cruſt is on it? O let it not be told in neighbour Nations that the God of* England *hath been so kinde to his people, and Saints in* England *so unkinde to their Father, and one unto another.*

Why (O yee Saints) should you not all in this day goe hand in hand about your Fathers worke? What hinders (unlesse the corruption of your hearts) your being as active for the Lord, and as holy as you will? Why should the great worke of the generation (wherein the cause and honour of your Father, and Redeemer is so deeply engaged) be at a stand whilst each of you are driving on particular designes, parties and interests? It is from you and you alone that God expects this service; 'tis worke the world cannot do, nor will God owne them in the doing of it; he calls for this from the hands of you his houshold Servants; neglect it, and he can raise up others, even the [illegible] *of holes and corners which shall doe the worke, when you shall be throwne by. When the Jewes once the visible people of God neglected generation worke, God threw them by, and brought in the Gentiles. The Gentile Churches now grafted in, prove fruitlesse*

in this worke, God may cut them off and graft in the Jewes againe. If those that are visibly the Children of Abraham, *put off Gods worke, God can of stones (great and hard hearted Sinners) raise up Children to* Abraham *which shall do the same. When the learned and righteous Scribes and Pharisees will not owne Christ, hee can raise up poore illiterate Fishermen, yea Publicans (the worst of Sinners) sitting at the receipt of custome for to do the thing. If* Jerusalem *the chiefe Citie will not furnish Christ with instruments to carry his worke on by, he can finde men for the same (where they were least expected) in the darke waste corners of* Galilee, *and the little hole of* Bethsaida, Joh. 1. 44. *Christ is never at a losse for instruments when he hath worke to do; that any of you are employd it is more his free grace towards you, then from any need that he hath of you, he is not beholding to you for doing his worke, but 'tis you are beholding to him that he will honour you in it. O therefore Saints awake, awake, put on your beautifull Garments, shake your selves from your dust, The Sun of righteousnesse is rising upon you, the whole earth begins to be enlightned with his glory, 'tis now high time to rowze up your spirits, awake out of sleepe, to be up and doing. Christ your Captaine Generall is abroad in the field upon his March, in the way to his Kingdome, he will make no halt, if you sleepe, loyter, straggle, or lie still, you will be left behind, and*

lose

loſe the ſight of your Leader; he will beare no delayes, if you will not now come and kiſſe him, ſubject your ſelves to him, he will make a riddance of you, and throw you by as he goes up to his Kingdome. The times of former neglect God winked at, but now he calls upon all that make mention of his Name not to ſit ſtill, not to keepe ſilence, nor give him reſt, till he eſtabliſh, and till he make Jeruſalem a praiſe in the earth. That you may do this worke, and the ſame in your hands may proſper, I ſhall (as an Additionall word unto the laſt Generall Head in the following Diſcourſe) leave with you theſe few particulars.

1. Endeavour union within your ſelves. *Diviſions will obſtruct the worke, union will further it. The great worke in the Apoſtles time never went on ſo gloriouſly and ſucceſsfully, as when the number of thoſe that beleeved were of* one heart *and of* one ſoule.

2. Strive after purity. *The ſeven Angels that go out of the Temple with the ſeven vials, their cloathing is* pure *and* white linnen, *Revel.* 15. 16.

3. Deſire God to lay you in with principles ſutable to his worke, neither below it, nor above it: *as a mans* principles *are, ſo will his* action *be, principle being the rule of action. Some mens* principles *are above generation worke, theſe vilifie and trample it as a low and carnall thing, and in ſtead of laying them ſelves out therein,*

therein, they slumber and sleepe, doing nothing at all: Others principles are below the worke, *and in stead of acting in it, they are offended at it. He whose principles are above the worke will not doe it, for the thing is low and base in his eyes; and he whose principles are below the worke (in case they continue so to be) shall not do it, for this is an evident signe that God will lay him by; it being the way of God when he will use a man in a worke to give him principles as high as that worke, and when he will lay a man by to blind him first to that worke, in which he will lay him by.*

4. Carry a meek Spirit along with you in the work. *When Christ rode as King into Jerusalem, he rode* meek, meek: *those that would accompany Christ to his Kingdome must be of that Spirit their King is of. Moses never failed but once in the worke of his generation, and it was then when he lost his* meek *Spirit,* Numb. 20. 10. *Expounded,* Psal. 106. 32. They angered him at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes. *But for what reason? see* ver. 33. because they provoked his Spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips. *God is often in the small and still voice, when neither in the whirlewinde, nor the Earthquake, nor the fire,* 1 Kings 19. 11, 12.

And lastly, Be much in praises. Praises in the last times shall have the same efficacy and effect that prayer in former times hath had. In Revel. 15.

Revel. 15. *Whilst the Saints who have gotten the victory over the Beast, and over his image, and over his marke, and over the number of his name, are standing on the Sea of glasse, with the Harps of God, and singing the Song of Moses, and of the Lambe,* ver. 2, 3, 4. *The seven Angells with the seven Vialls full of the wrath of God to be powred out upon the Heads of the Enemies of the Church, issue out of the Temple,* ver. 5, 6, 7. *And in* Revel. 19. 1. 3. *'Tis observable, the final ruine of Babylon comes in as an effect of the frequent praises of Saints; in* ver. 1. *They sing Hallelujahs.—*I heard a voice of much people in Heaven, saying, Hallelujah—*and* ver. 3. *again they said Alleluja, and what followed? her smoke rose up for ever and ever.*

These few particulars coming to my minde whilst this Epistle was drawing up, I thought good in this place to insert. I shall no longer detaine thee (Spirituall Friend and Reader) from the thing it selfe, which treats of that great work which the eyes and hearts of not a few of Gods people at this day are fixed upon, and taken up with; in reading of which if thou shalt receive any light, or reap any spirituall benefit, give all the praise to the Lord, and pray for him, who is

A Companion in the tribulation and Kingdome, and patience of Jesus Christ,

J. T.

READER;

BY reason of the Authors absence from the Presse many faults have been committed, which otherwise he had corrected, which thou art desired to passe over, and amongst them to take notice of these following, which are the chiefe.

ERRATA.

PAge 19. line 20. for *what* read *with*. p. 43. l. 2. for *ready*, r. *narrow*. p. 46. l. 25. for *Ch.* 2. 9. r. *Ch.* 9. 2. p. 49. l. 12. dele *what*. p. 51. l. 24. dele *that*. p. 52. l. 14. for *partly*, r. *fully*. p. 54. l. 17. r. 1650. [illegible] p. 70. l. 26. r. *Joynting*. p. 71. l. 21. dele *given forth*. p. 81. l. 23. for *Lesson* r. *Lessen*.

A Brief and Seaſonable Word, humbly offred to the View and Conſideration of the Saints and people of God in this Generation.

Eſpecially to thoſe in whoſe hands for the preſent the *Work* lyes, relating to the Work of the preſent Age or Generation we live in.

ACT. 13. 36.

For David *after he had ſerved his owne Generation, by the will of God fell on ſleep.*

His Chapter for the [illegible] com[illegible] a *rehearſall* [illegible] *and heavenly* [illegible] by Paul [illegible] Subj[illegible] *Chriſt*, [illegible] *Death* [illegible]

lars of Christian Religion, the two chiefe Heads, or common-places, to which *Paul* reduceth his whole Gospel. 1 *Cor.* 15. 3, 4.

His scope in treating of these being to *convince the Jewes* (who were in expectation of the Messiah, or Christ) *that the Messiah was already come, dead and risen againe, and that this Jesus whom he preached unto them was he*, and also to perswade all sorts of men, whether *Jewes*, or *Gentiles*, who expected Salvation, to look for it no where else but onely from this Jesus who was dead for sins, and raised againe for the justification of sinners.

And it seemes this was the Apostles ordinary way, and method of preaching, not onely here but every where else, especially when he met with any *Jewes*, as appears, *Acts* 17. 2, 3.

The words read are brought in under the last of these, *viz. The Doctrine of the Resurrection*, as the Apostle was proving, and clearing that, for having evidenced *Christs Resurrection* from the testimony of many who were Eye-witnesses of the same, who had both seen him and conversed with him after he was risen, *v.* 31. He for the farther confirmation thereof makes his of that notable testimony of the Prophet *David*, [illegible] 16 10, who seeing

ing beforehand the resurrection of Christ, spake thereof on this wise; Thou shalt not suffer thine holy One to see corruption. Which words, saith the Apostle *could not be understood of David*, for they doe no way agree to him, *who fell on sleep, was laid unto his Fathers, and saw corruption; but they doe most fitly agree to this Jesus*, who was dead, and by the power of God in three dayes rayſed againe, and ſo ſaw no corruption, and therefore muſt needs be underſtood of him, and by them his *reſurrection* was Prophetically pointed out many hundreds of yeares before the time.

And it ſeemes that this Argument drawn from the words of *David* to prove the *reſurrection of Christ* was of no little force; for not onely *Paul* the Apoſtle of the Gentiles, but *Peter* alſo the great Apoſtle of the Circumciſion, makes uſe of it to the ſame end and purpoſe that *Paul* doth heere, *Acts* 2. 25, 26, 27. &c.

The words themſelves that I have pitched upon, are not any part of the Apoſtles Argument or proofe, but ſomewhat worthy obſervation in *David* brought in by the by (as it were in a Parentheſis) whilſt the Apoſtle was following up of his maine Argument, which was *how that*

David fell on sleep, was laid to his Fathers, and saw corruption, and that therefore this Prophecy of not seeing corruption could not be meant of David himselfe, but must relate to Christ, plainly importing his *resurrection.*

But now there was something Antecedent to *Davids* falling asleep very admirable and remarkeable in him, which the Apostle will by no meanes let slip, but sets it before all as a thing worthy their imitation, which is, how that *David* before he fell on sleep served his own generation by the will of God. *For David after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep.*

I shall first Paraphrase upon the words, and then come to my observation from them.

Served his generation, (i. e.) did the worke of his *generation*; What was the worke of his *generation David* applied himselfe unto, he was not an idler, a sluggard in his *generation*. *Timothy* served with *Paul* in the Gospel. *Phil.* 2. 22. (i. e.) did the worke of the Gospel together with *Paul.*

His own generation, not another *generation*; every *generation* (as I shall shew anon) hath its proper and peculiar *work.*

Now *David* made it his businesse to find out and

and attend unto that *worke* which did properly belong to his *generation*.

By the will of God. These words take in the *ground* or *rise* of *Davids obedience*, the *matter* and *manner* of it. The *ground* or *rise* was *Gods will*, God willed *David* to do *the worke of his generation*, and because God willed him he did it: he served the *will of God* in serving his *generation*, and therefore served his *generation*, because it was the *will of God*. The *matter* of *Davids obedience*, was not humane inventions or mens traditions, but such things onely as God did *will*, and call him to doe in his *generation*. The *manner* of *Davids obedience* was not in what way he lifted, or in humane prudence judged best, but in such a way as was most consonant to Gods *will* revealed to him: as he did not of his owne head frame the matter, so did he not determine of the *way* or *manner*, but in both did set before him the *will of God*, and act according to that *will*.

Not to grasp together all that lies in these words, my aime being onely at this, *viz.*

Doct. *That it is an especiall duty lying upon the Saints to attend unto and be active in the worke or workes of their generation.*

Gods famous Worthies who have gone before

before us (whereof *David* here is instance) have done thus, whose examples (though not in every thing, yet) in these things are rules to us, and therefore wee should doe it: yea, its *the will of God*, this *David* heere grounds his obedience upon, which *will* makes it as well our duty as his, and therefore we ought to do it.

In the carrying of this on, I shall shew.

1. What *generation* worke is, and how the same differs from other workes.

2. That Saints in the severall *generations* they have lived in, have ever had the proper and peculiar workes of their *generations*.

3. That it is a thing of very great concernment for a Saint to attend to, and be industrious in the worke of his *generation*.

4. Wherein doth the worke of the present *generation* lie.

5. How each one in particular may finde out that part or parcell of it that is properly his work in his *generation*.

6. And lastly, How *generation-worke* may be carried on so as that God may be served in the *generation*.

First, What *generation-worke* is, and how differenced from other workes.

Anſ.

Anſ. *Generation worke is that worke, or thoſe workes which the way or manner of Gods diſpenſations in the age a Saint lives in, calls him unto.*

When either the condition of the Church or people of God, or the tranſactions of God in the *age* wee live in, or the light of that *age* calls us to ſome ſpeciall employment, wee may looke upon that *worke* to be the *worke* of the *generation*.

So that in the *worke* of our *generation*, although the matter of the worke be no other, then what the word hath laid downe, and is commanded in the generall, yet the call to the *worke* takes its principall riſe from the way or manner of Gods *diſpenſations* in, or unto that *age*.

Hence the *worke* of the *generation* differs from that *worke* which lies upon a Saint to performe, as he is a Saint, for thoſe *workes* are not limited to any one *generation*, but are common to all; what I ſtand bound to do as I am a *Saint*, I am alike obliged to do in that reſpect, in whatſoever *age* or *generation* I live: but now the *worke* of my *generation* I ſtand bound to that by vertue of Gods *diſpenſations* towards the *age* I live in; in ſuch

manner, as that thing which now is my *worke* living in this age, did I live in another age, wherein the *dispensations* of God were after another manner, would not be my *worke*, but another thing would be my *worke*.

Hence likewise the *worke* of our *generation* is different from the *workes* of our *callings*, *station*, *relation* or present *condition*, for every of these bring their severall *workes*, but these properly as they are such, (*i. e.*) *workes* or *duties* flowing from my *calling*, *station* in the world, *relation* or present *condition*, are not the *worke* of my *generation*.

Though heere I grant it that the *worke* of a Saints *generation* may fall in with the *workes* forementioned, either those which lie upon him as a *Saint*, or those which are the proper *workes* of his *calling*, *station*, *relation* or present *condition*; *i. e.* the *worke* of a Saints *generation*, and these may be one and the same in Substance, though two in diverse respects. And I shall make out to you.

1. For *common duties which lie upon a Saint as a Saint*: A *Saint* may have some *duties* lying upon him as he is such a one, binding all *Saints* in all ages, all the world over, which yet in some times may be the very *worke* of the *generation*. As

As for example. *Beleeving* is a *worke* which lies upon a *Saint* as a *Saint*: A man as he is a *Saint* is alwayes in whatsoever *age* or *generation* he lives in bound to *beleeve*, and have confidence in the promise and power of God: but it may so fall out that the dispensations of God towards his people may be such as that *beleeving* which is a *duty* lying upon *Saints* in all *generations*, may be the great *worke* God calls unto in that *age* or *generation* a *Saint* lives in. So it was in the time of *Moses*, and therefore (as I conceive) did God so severely punish the *unbeleefe* of that *age*, because this their sin was not onely a neglect of a great and *common duty*, but a neglecting the very *worke* of their *generation*.

Againe, *Prayer* is a *duty*, which lies upon a *Saint* as a *Saint*, no *praying* man no *Saint*; for *Saints* have their denomination from calling upon *the name of the Lord*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. But now *prayer* a *duty* so generall, and common to all *generations*, may be as the case may fall out one speciall *worke* of that *age* or *generation* a *Saint* lives in. And so (I take it) it was in *Daniells* time, when *Israels* returne from *Babylon* was approaching, and therefore *Daniel* is so stirred up to pray, and his *prayer*

er made so *well pleasing* unto God, because he did not the thing onely as a common duty, but as the *work* of his *Generation.*

And on the contrary, upon the same ground wee are now speaking of, God doth (as I conceive) forbid *Jeremy* to *pray* for the people of that time, because *prayer* though as a common *duty* is remained, yet did it then cease as any *part* of the *worke* of the *Generation.*

2. A *Saint may have some duty lying upon him by vertue of his calling, which may also be the very worke of his Generation.*

As for example, Suppose a Godly man be constituted a *Generall*, or an *Under-Officer* in an *Army*, raised against some great and professed enemies of Jesus Christ, at such a time as by Gods appointment, the ruine of these his enemies drawes neer: for him to fight for, and under those, in their defence who have given this power and command to him, is the very *worke* of his *calling*, that which his place enjoyns him unto: but now considering the cause he is engaged in, which is the pulling downe of some potent enemies of Jesus Christ, which God in, or about that age he lives in hath determined to ruine, so his fighting is not onely the worke of his *calling*, but the very worke of his *Generation* also.

Againe, Put case a man is a *Minister*, the making knowne the truths of God to others is the *worke* of his *calling*, in doing whereof he doth no more then what his *calling* requires of him; but now as such a one studies and contrives making it his designe scope and aime, not onely to speak truths (which another man by being conscientious in his *calling* may do) but to speak truths, and truths in such a manner, as is most futable unto, and may through the blessing of God most conduce to the good and benefit of soules in those times and places he lives in, so he doth the *worke* of his *Generation*.

And as a *Souldier* in the field may do the *worke* of his *calling* by being faithfull unto, and valiant for those who entrust him, and yet (the *worke* of his *calling* and *Generation* being mixed) not *eye* all this while the *worke* of his *Generation*. So may a *Minister* in the Pulpit do the *worke* of his *calling* by preaching *truth* soundly and powerfully, and yet (not having respect to what *truths* the present *age*, and the necessity of his hearers do in a more especiall manner rather then others, call for the opening and applying of) he may misse the *worke* of his *Generation*.

A Saint by vertue of his station and re-

lation may have some duty lying upon him, which may be the worke of his Generation, and yet the worke of his station and relation also.

As for instance. A godly man is a *Master* of a Family, for him now according to his ability, to *teach*, *instruct*, and *principle* his wife, Children and Servants, and to *governe* in his *Family*, is the *duty* of his *station*, or the place God hath set him in; and the *duty* of his *relation* also, as he is a Husband, Father, Master, and when he doth this he doth no other thing then what the *station* God hath set him in, and the bond of *relation* binds him to performe: But now when he doth so *govern* in his Family, and so *instruct* and *principle* those under him, and in relation to him, as that both himselfe and his may acknowledge, and in some measure answer, the call of Gods present *dispensations* towards the *age* he lives in, whether to suffer, if the *dispensation* call for that, or to be serviceable in any active way, to some speciall cause of God on foot in that *age*, he doth the worke of his *Generation*: though his activity lye within the bounds of his family, yet so long as what he acts tends to bring himselfe and his, so much as may be, to answer the present

dispensations of God, he doth the *worke* of his *generation*.

4. *A Saint by vertue of the present condition he may be in, may stand obliged to some duty, which yet may be the worke of his generation as well as of his condition.* As to exercise *faith* and *patience* under sufferings for Christ, is the *worke* of a suffering *condition*; but now if my sufferings fall out in such an *age* wherein the Church of God in generall lies under persecution, then the exercise of *faith* and *patience* under the Crosse, is not onely the *worke* of my *condition*, but the very *worke* of my *generation*, that which the *dispensations* of God in the *age* I live in calls for at my hands.

By what hath been said we see that such a case may be that in the substance of the *worke*, *that worke which lies upon a Saint as a Saint, and which is the worke of his calling, station, relation, and condition, may be the same with the worke of his generation*: and yet in diverse respects there may be such a vast difference, that one man doing the same *worke* shall do no more then that which lies upon him, & every one else as *Saints*, or which his *calling, station, relation* or *condition* calls for, and another in doing the very same *worke*, shall do all this as well and better then he, and the *worke* of his generation also.

From

From what hath been ſpoken as touching this the finall concluſion is, *that the worke of our generation is not any worke diſtinct in Subſtance from all other workes* (for were it ſo, it would be a more eaſie thing to finde it out then indeed it is) *but the difference lies in conſidering the ſame worke under divers reſpects*: 'tis not diverſity of *worke*, ſo much as diverſity of *reſpect* in *working* that makes the difference.

Secondly, The next thing to be opened is, *That the Saints in their ſeverall generations have had, and ſtill have their proper and peculiar workes.* My meaning is, That there is ſome *worke*, which is more properly the *worke* of *Saints* living in one *generation* then it is of *Saints* living in another. *Saints* of this *generation* have ſome *workes*, which *Saints* of former *generations* had not; and *Saints* of former *generations* had ſome *workes*, which *Saints* of this *generation* have not.

For the making out of this I ſhall draw a *line* through the ſeverall *generations* that *Saints* from the beginning have lived in, and take a view of *Saints*, and of their *worke* or *workes*, each of them in their ſeverall *generations*.

To begin with *Noah* (for I cannot point out all *generations* from *Adam* downe)

downwards, but such onely upon which some remarkeable *actions* of eminent *Saints* dwelling in those *generations* are fixed, thereby making them memorable to after times) he besides all his other *workes* had the proper *worke* of his *generation*, which was to build an *Arke for the preservation of his house and the creatures from the flood and universall deluge*; by which he preached a reall Sermon for one hundred and twenty yeares to the old world, all the while the *Arke* was a preparing, and by which as the Apostle saith, *Heb.* 11. 7. *He condemned the world*, (i. e.) the persons of that *generation*, and this *worke* it was a *worke* distinct from the *worke* of all other *generations*.

Next to him *Abraham* had the proper *worke* of his *generation*, which was *to goe forth of his Country, and from his Fathers house, unto a Land which God should shew him, and there to follow God from one place to another, beleeving that one day his seed should enjoy that Land that now hee was a stranger in*, but in the meane time to dwell in Tents with *Isaac* and *Jacob*, heires with him of the same promise. This was not the *worke* of after *generations*, yet was it the *worke* of his and their *generations*.

After

After him *Moses* and *Aaron* and other *faithfull* ones in their dayes had the proper *worke* of their *Generation*, which was *to look up to God and trust him for meat and drinke, and rayment, and preservation in a barren wildernesse where none of these things were to be had, and where they lay open on every side to the malice of cruell imbittered enemies.* To trust God in such an extraordinary way was not the *worke* of after *generations*, which yet was the *speciall worke* of this *generation*.

Come to *Davids* time, he also had the proper *worke* of his *Generation*, wherein (as our Text witnesseth) he *served God*, which was *to cut downe Gods enemies round about, and thereby to make room and provision for the House of God, which was to be built at Jerusalem*, here was his distinctive *worke*.

Next after him comes *Salomon*, whose distinct *worke* was *to build the Temple of God which his Father David had made room and provision for*.

To passe over the *works* of many following *generations*, let us come to *Jeremiahs* time, had not Gods people in that age the proper *worke* of their *Generation*? which was *willingly to put their necks under and quietly to submit unto the yoke of the King of*

of Babylon, giving themſelves up unto captivity untill ſeventy years ſhould be accompliſhed. God did not give any ſuch poſitive commands unto other *Generations.*

After this in *Ezra's*, *Nehemiahs*, and *Daniels* time, theſe worthies and the *Saints* of that *age* had the proper *worke* of their *Generation*, which was *to go forth of Babylon, and rebuild the Temple of God at Jeruſalem, which Nebuchadnezzar had deſtroyed.*

Thus all along in the times of the Old Teſtament, Gods Church and people in their ſeverall *Generations* have had their ſeverall *workes.*

Let us look to the *New Teſtament* wch dawned in *John the Baptiſt*, had not *John* the proper *worke* of his *Generation*, which was *to be the Fore-runner and Harbinger of the Meſſiah, to declare to the Nation of the Jewes that the Meſſiah whom they expected and waited for, was now approaching, and that the glorious Kingdome of God in the pure adminiſtration of the Goſpel was at hand, and that therefore it did behoove every one now to have their eyes and hearts turned from Moſes towards him, and his adminiſtration, which was now approaching.*

After him the Apoſtles in their time had the proper *worke* of their *Generation*, which was *to goe forth and publiſh the glad*

tidings of ſalvation, which before were cooped up within the narrow compaſſe of Judea to all the world, beginning at Jeruſalem: to gather Saints together ſo faſt as they were converted into Churches, and to appoint over theſe Paſtors and Teachers; and alſo to give rules and directions for the right ordering and governing of the Churches unto the end of the world.

Let us come to the Saints of following Generations, had not they likewiſe their proper workes, which was in ſome to bear witneſſe before the wicked world, and the Heathen Tyrants and Infidels of thoſe ages wherein they lived, to the truth of that Doctrine they had received from the Apoſtles before them, by ſealing the ſame with their blood, and willingly giving themſelves up (as ſheep to the ſlaughter) to the cruelties, tortures, maſſacres of the Paganiſh world in bearing teſtimony to the truth of Jeſus.

Afterwards the work of the next Generation was to bear witneſſe by writing, preaching, and all ſound doctrine, againſt the damnable Hereſies of Arrius and his complices, and others, which through that little tranquility which the Church enjoyed under Conſtantine crept in, and overſpread the Chriſtian world.

In after ages for ſome hundreds of years

years together, the *worke* of *ſaints* in their *Generations* was *to bear witneſſe by ſpeaking and ſuffering unto the truth and worſhip of Jeſus, againſt the pernicious errors, and falſe worſhip of Antichriſt, and the boundleſſe and ſwelling pride, and pomp of that man of ſin.*

In *Generations* ſince, the *worke* hath bin *to recover the truth, and worſhip of Chriſt, which was well nigh buried under Antichriſts reigne, to its ancient purity, luſtre, and beauty:* And ſo *Luther* and the *Saints* and *Worthies* of his *Generation*, as their principall work did recover out of the Jawes of the Beaſt, the precious truths of Chriſts *Prieſtly Office*, the glorious Doctrine of our *Juſtification by Chriſt alone*, which was well nigh ſwallowed up by the Antichriſtian innovations of Maſſes, Croſſes, Pardons, Pennance, Purgatory, Vowes, Pilgrimages, ſolitary and ſingle life, with other inventions of humane wiſdome, for the procuring a righteouſneſſe of our owne.

And ſince him the great *work* of *Saints* in their *Generations* hath been *to recover the Kingly office of Chriſt, which the Lordly pomp and Tyranny of the man of ſin and his followers had caſt a miſt upon, to ſet up Chriſt as ſole King and Governour in his Churches, as well as the onely and alone high Prieſt of his Saints.*

Thus *Saints* all along from the beginning of the world in their ſeverall *Generations*, have had their ſeverall *workes* proper and peculiar to the *Generations* that they lived in; ſo as that what hath been the *work* of one *Generation*, hath not been the *worke* of another; and what hath been the *worke* of that other, hath not been the *worke* of that: unleſſe at ſuch time (as it fell out in the *Generations* of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, and alſo the ſeverall *Generations* of the *ſaints* under the *Roman* & *Antichriſtian* perſecutions) wherein the *diſpenſations* of God towards his people hath continued the ſame, and for ſubſtance alike for divers *generations* together, there the *worke* hath been the ſame: for no ſubſtantiall change in *diſpenſation*, there is none in the *worke* of our *generation*, it being variation of *diſpenſation* that cauſeth the *worke* of our *generation* for to vary.

3d Generall Head; That it is *a thing of very great concernment for a ſaint to attend unto, and be active in the worke of his generation.*

Generation worke is the moſt neglected *worke* of all others with the generality of Profeſſors, who either conſider not that ſuch a *worke* there is, or if they do, yet they

they think that it belongs to others, not to them to mind it: but in case they be industrious in those common *duties* wch lye upon them as *saints*, and those special *duties* which attend their *callings*, *stations*, *relations*, or present *condition*, it is enough for them, and matters not, whether they be *active* in the businesse of their *generation*, yea or no. Yea many that are employed therein do not sufficiently weigh the greatnesse of the *worke* they have in hand. I shall therefore here endeavour to shew of how *great concernment it is for a Saint to attend unto, and be active in this worke*, which I shall lay before you in some particulars.

1. *God by his dispensations cals aloud for it.* The *dispensations* of God have a *voyce*, and God oft by these bespeaks *a duty*, or *duties* of his people, *Mic. 6. 9. The Lords voice cryeth unto the City* --- what voice is this? why meerly the voice of a *dispensation*, Gods *dispensations* being commands, *Heare the Rod, and who hath appointed it*: to disobey then the visible call of a *dispensation*, is to disobey a command of God.

The hazarding our lives is a weighty matter, and if done carelesly a great sin, yet *Esther* upon the visible *call* of a *dispensation* (*viz.* Gods cause and people lying

at the ſtake ready to ſuffer) runs this ſore *hazard:* to which though ſhe were ſtirred up by *Mordecai* (as one Chriſtian friend now may ſtir up another, in ſuch a capacity as *Eſther* was, to befriend Gods cauſe, were it now dying, as then it was) yet were not *Mordecais* words her warrant, he being not endued with a Propheticall Spirit, nor ſpeaking as ſuch, (as his doubtfull ſpeech ſheweth, *Who knows whether thou art come to the Kingdome for ſuch a time as this?*) but the *call* of the *diſpenſation.*

Meroz was *called* by Gods *diſpenſations* to *help the Lord againſt the mighty.* We read not of any particular command *Meroz* had to do it, onely the call of a *diſpenſation,* (Gods people were under *oppreſſors,* and God was up to deliver them) which *call Meroz* neglecting, *Meroz* it doubly and bitterly *curſed* by the Angel of the Lord for it, *Judg.* 5. 23. *Curſe ye Meroz* (ſaid the Angel of the Lord) *curſe ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof: becauſe they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty.* Whereas contrariwiſe *Jael* the wife of *Heber* the *Kenite,* having no other *call,* but this very *call Meroz* had (for though it were propheſied *a woman ſhould ſlay Siſera,* yet was not that

that revealed to her, or in caſe it were, yet no particular woman named, that was no warrant for her) in obedience hereto ſlaying Siſera, is doubly bleſt, and that *above women*, as the other is doubly and bitterly curſed. *Ver.* 24, 25. *Bleſſed above women ſhall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be; bleſſed ſhall ſhe be above women in the Tent---*

2. *Generation worke is of all others the greateſt worke, and a neglect herein the greateſt ſin.* My meaning is, that that *obligation* whereby I ſtand bound unto the *work* of my *generation*, is a greater *obligation*, then that whereby I ſtand bound to any other *duty*; and my fault or error herein is a greater and more provoking error, then any other of my errors; which Aſſertion although it may ſeem ſtrange, yet it appears thus, in that God himſelfe doth more delight in, and account of that *duty* performed, which is the *worke* of our *generation*, then he doth of the performance of any other *duty*, although it be a thing eſpecially commanded by himſelfe: and on the other ſide, God is more diſpleaſed with, and provoked by, thoſe errors that men commit in the *worke* of their *generation*, then with any other of their errors whatſoever.

The firſt is evident in thoſe words of *Samuel* to *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 15. 22. *Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings, as in obeying the voyce of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better then ſacrifice, and to hearken then the fat of Rams.* The offering *ſacrifice* was Gods command, and a principall part of his worſhip in thoſe dayes, yet when *Saul* out of pretence of obeying this *command* of God, diſobeyed God in that other ſpeciall *command* of utterly deſtroying *Amalek*, which was the great *work* God had to do, and *Saul* was employed in, in that *generation*: the Prophet from the mouth of the Lord doth not onely reprehend him, and condemn his fact, but pronounceth of theſe 2 things upon this occaſion now compared together, that God did more abundantly delight in, and account of the obeying of his voyce in that *worke* which was the work of *Sauls generation*, then either he did, or would do in burnt-offerings, ſacrifices, or the fat of Rams, tho things of his own appointment: in a word, the meaning is this, that obedience to God in that thing which is the *worke* of our *generation*, is more acceptable to God then the performance of the moſt ſpeciall acts of his worſhip, as ſacrifice and burnt-

offerings

offerings in thoſe dayes were.

Hence we find in Scripture (which ſerves further to evidence this) that when ſpeciall Ordinances or acts of worſhip have come in competition with the *work* of the *generation*, Ordinances and acts of worſhip have yielded and given place to that. Circumciſion was a ſpeciall Ordinance given to *Abrahams* ſeed, with that ſeverity that the uncircumciſed was to be cut off from amongſt his people, yet forty years together whilſt *Iſrael* walked in the wildernes, the *worke* of that *generation* being ſuch as could not with ſafety to their perſons admit of Circumciſion, which required ſome fixed abode, at leaſt for ſome time, (as *Ioſh.* 5. 8.) which they were ever uncertain of being to follow the motion of the cloud (as *Numb.* 9. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.) Circumſion though Gods Ordinance (rather then God will alter the way of his *diſpenſations*, which he could eaſily have done) for forty years together (till *Iſrael* was entred *Canaan*, and ſo from under that *diſpenſation* of the cloud) muſt, and doth yield and give place unto the work of the Generation.

And which is yet more, not onely ſpeciall Ordinances, but alſo common *duties*

ties have given place to the *worke* of the *generation*. To keepe inviolate Articles and conditions of peace when made, tho with a Turk, is a *duty* which the rule of common equity and juſtice betwixt man and man requires. Yet *Iael* when the *work* of her *generation* called for all the help ſhe could lend it (though a League were betwixt *Iabin* King of *Hazor*, and her Husband, yet) in the time of peace, (which peace too (as far as we can underſtand) betwixt her Husband and this *King*, was kept inviolate as on *Iabins* part) ſhe (taking her advantage) murders *Siſera* the chief Captain of *Iabin* King of *Hazor* in his Tent, and is ſo far from being blamed, as ſhe is *commended* and *bleſſed* by the Holy Ghoſt for it.

And as this firſt is clear, ſo the other (*viz. That neglect of Generation-worke is the greateſt ſin*) is as evident, not onely from the foregoing words of God to *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 15. 23. paralelling his diſobedience herein with ſins of the higheſt, and of a ſcarlet dye; as rebellion, witchcraft, and idolatry; but alſo if we conſider, how that of all the ſins we read of in Scripture, we find not any more provoking to the Lord, and falling ſo heavy upon the head of the ſinner, as offences and

and neglects in the *worke* of their *generation*. The Spies who were ſent by *Moſes* to view the land of *Canaan*, becauſe they ſinned againſt the *worke* of their *generation*, they preſently dye of the plague before the Lord. The whole Congregation of *Iſrael* (not *Moſes* and *Aaron* excepted) becauſe they diſtruſted the power and goodneſs of God (whereas the great *worke* of that *generation* was to *truſt God*, and *beleeve* in his *power* and *goodneſſe*, which Leſſon they were taught by the daily *diſpenſations* of God towards them, wherein his *power* and *goodneſs* were manifeſted before them) have that heavy and diſmall ſentence paſſed upon them, *That they ſhould never enter into the reſt of Canaan, but their Carkeiſes ſhould fall in the wilderneſs*, Numb. 14. 29. Which afterwards God in the way of his providence fulfilled upon them, cauſing them to wander in the wilderneſs fortie yeares, untill all that *generation* was conſumed. And which is very obſervable, they beſides this were guilty of many other grievous ſins, being *Idolaters*, *fornicators*, *Luſters*, *&c.* as the Apoſtle tells us, 1 *Cor.* 10. beg. and yet for none of theſe is the *ſentence* paſſed upon them, but onely for their miſcarriage in that which was the

worke

worke of their *generation*, Heb. 3. 19. *They could not enter in becauſe of their unbeleefe.*

Yea wherefore was the *unbeleefe* of the *Jewes* in our Saviours, and the Apoſtles time, puniſhed ſo ſeverely with a breaking of, and a rejection for now 1600 yeares together, but becauſe therein they ſinned againſt the *worke* of their *generation*, which was to beleeve in Chriſt, and embrace him as the Meſſiah, who they had long expected, and God in this *age* had ſent amongſt them their crucifying of Chriſt was a grievous ſin, but becauſe not a ſin againſt the *worke* of their *generation*, therefore they are not for that act rejected, but contrariwiſe after this the Goſpel is by ſpeciall command to be preached to them, as *Luk.* 24. 47. but for not beleeving in Chriſt, and receiving him for the true Meſſiah, which was the *worke* of their *generation*, they are rejected, (as *Rom.* 11. 20.--*becauſe of unbeleefe they are broken off*--) and ſo remaine unto this day.

To all which let me further adde, that not in theſe onely, but many examples more, it ſeemes to be Gods uſuall way in the execution of his wrath againſt ſinners, to write the ſentence of their condemnation, upon the forehead of this ſin, rather then

then any other. *Saul* ſinned in offering Sacrifice, and was then threatned with the loſſe of the Kingdome, 1 *Sam.* 13. 13, 14. But the execution of this threatning, and the un-kinging of him comes in upon his miſcarriage in that of *Amalek*, a ſin againſt the *worke* of his *generation*. *Aaron* ſinned moſt fouly in the buſineſs of the Golden Calfe, and at another time in murmuring againſt *Moſes*; but the ſentence paſſed upon him that he ſhould die in the wilderneſs, is for his not *beleeving* at the waters of *Meribah*, a ſin againſt the *worke* of his *generation*, *Numb.* 20. 12, 13. God uſually writing the ſentence of his diſpleaſure upon the forehead of the moſt provoking ſin.

From what hath been ſpoken my Aſſertion ſtands firme, *viz.* *That the obligation whereby I ſtand bound unto the worke of my generation, is a greater obligation then that whereby I ſtand bound to any other duty, and my fault or error herein is a greater error then any other of my errors.* From which principle (before I leave it) I ſhall draw another, which naturally flowes out of it, viz: *That it is the duty of a Chriſtian man, employd in generation worke, when other workes and this do ſtand in competition, to chooſe neglect in any duty, rather then in that, wherein the worke*

worke of his generation lies, yea to breake through all that he may follow this, his obligation heereto being the greateſt obligation, his neglect heerein the moſt provoking ſin: Which thing though for the truth thereof it need not bluſh, carrying its evidence with its ſelfe, yet in receiving of it, uſe Chriſtian wiſdome, and much more in the practice.

And heere as a Concluſion to all the reſt, let me take the boldnes for to adde, what hath ſometimes been the iſſue of retired thoughts, that for this reaſon hath God ſo gloriouſly, and eminently owned, beyond beleefe, and to admiration, the never to be forgotten proceedings of the Army of *England*, becauſe (though they have ſeemed, at leaſt been charged by ſlanderous Tongues and Pens, with violating the bonds of relation) they yet have in all preſſed on, and followed after (though through a cloud of diſmaying difficulties and dangers) the *worke* of their *generation.*

Thirdly, In doing *the worke of our generation wee are moſt ſerviceable to the deſigne of God, that is on foot in the age wee live in.* As there never yet was an age in the world wherein God was not driving on, one great *deſigne* or other, (although the manifeſtation of his more glorious *deſignes*, and

and *workes* of wonder, have ever been limited to ſome particular *generations*;) ſo hath God in all *ages* declared himſelfe exceedingly well pleaſed with ſuch of his children, whoſe obedience hath more directly fallen in with his *deſigne* on foot in their *age*. *Daniel* whilſt he is praying and mourning, hath the Angel *Gabriel* ſent unto him with this redoubled teſtimony from Heaven concerning him, that he was *a man greatly beloved*, Chap. 9. 21, 22, 23. Chap. 10. 11, 19. *Eſay*, *Jeremie*, and other godly men prayed, yet do we not read of any ſuch teſtimony given concerning them praying, as is here concerning *Daniel*: why ſo? the reaſon may be this, *Daniells* prayer fell in with Gods *deſigne*: God was upon a great *deſigne*, to deliver his people out of *Babylon*, this *Daniell* prayes for, Gods *deſigne*, and *Daniels* obedience meet together, and therefore doth God ſet a ſpeciall ſtampe upon *Daniels* prayer.

Now in doing the *worke* of our *generation*, wee are more ſerviceable to Gods *deſigne*, then we can be any other way; for there being onely a reſpective difference betwixt theſe two, (the ſame *worke* which reſpecting God is his *deſigne*, reſpecting us is the *worke* of our *generation*:

Iſraells

Iſraells deliverance from *Babylon* was in reſpect of God his *deſigne*, but in reſpect of *Daniel* the praying for this, was the *worke* of his *generation*,) we cannot be active in the one, but in ſo doing we become ſerviceable to the other: as *Daniel* by prayer became inſtrumentally ſerviceable to *Iſraels* delivery. Which by plentifull ordinary inſtance might be illuſtrated, but enough having been ſaid for the underſtanding of the Reader in theſe few words, I ſhall not multiply.

4. God hath *choiſe diſtinguiſhing mercy for that man that followes him in the worke of his generation*; as,

1. God will *overlook many failings in that man*. *Caleb* and *Joſhua* were men, and therefore had their *failings* as other men, yet becauſe *Caleb* and *Joſhua* did cleave to God in that ſpeciall *worke* they were employd in, *Numb.* 14. 6, 7. &c. which was the *worke* of their *generation*, therefore God overlooking all their other *failings*, as though they had had none at all, pronounceth of them that they *wholly followed the Lord*, Numb. 32. 12.

2. God will *ſtand by that man, and never leave him*, that ſticks cloſe to him in the *worke* of his *generation*. *Abraham* left his Country to attend the *worke* of his *generation*,

ration, and how did God in all perills *ſtand by Abraham*; *Abraham* was put to it in *Ægypt*, and like to looſe his wife, God *ſtood by* him there, *Gen.* 12. *Abraham* was engaged with foure Kings, *Gen.* 14. God *ſtood by* him there. *Abraham* was in a great ſtrait at *Gerar*, *Gen.* 20. God *ſtood by* him there. *Abraham ſtood* to the *worke* of his *generation*, and God for ever *ſtood* by *Abraham*.

3. God will *own that man in caſe he live thereto in the worke of the next generation*, that abides faithfull in the *worke* of the preſent *generation* he lives in. It is ſaid of *Noah*, Gen. 6. 9. *Noah was a juſt man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God*; teaching us thus much, by ſpeaking in the plurall number, that *Noah was juſt, walking with God in the generations he lived in* before the flood came; and when the flood was coming, this *Noah* was the onely man that God did *own* in the *worke* of that *generation*. So *Joſhua* was faithfull in the *worke* of that *generation* whilſt *Iſrael* journeyed in the wildernes, and how eminently did God *own Joſhua* in the *worke* of the next *generation* when *Iſrael* entred *Canaan*.

4. God will *provide a hiding place for that man againſt thoſe ſtormes which may fall*

upon the generation he lives in, that is active in the worke of his generation. Noah had an Arke provided for him when a flood came upon the world of ungodly men. In Ezekiells time, Chap. 9. when the destroying Angels were to passe through Jerusalem, a mark of deliverance was first to be set upon the foreheads of all those that did sigh and cry for the abominations thereof, which was the worke God in such an age did call unto, as Isai. 22. 12, 13. Yea though Noah, Daniel, and Job (active men) living in a perverse backsliding generation, cannot ward off Gods blow from the generation, yet they shall deliver their own soules, Ezek. 14. 13. to 22. Personall deliverances shall attend such men in common calamities, and nationall desolations.

5. God will reveale his secrets to such. Noah in his time had the secret of drowning the old world revealed to him. Abraham in his time the secret of Sodoms destruction, the secret of Israels bondage in Egypt, the secret of the Messiahs comming forth of his loynes, discovered to him. David in his time had that secret where the Temple should be built to him, 1 Cron. 22. 1, 2. compared with 2 Chron. 3. 1. Daniel in his time the secret of Nebuchadnezzars dreame, the secret of the time of Christs comming

comming in the fleſh, (*Chap.* 9. 24, 25, 26.) and of the *Jewes* converſion, (*Chap.* 12. 11, 12.) to him. And *Peter* and *Paul* in their times the ſecret of the Gentiles converſion to them, *Act.* 10. 9. to 17. *Gal.* 1. 16, 17. God having in all *generations* ſtill made thoſe keepers of his Cabinet, who have been faithfull in the *worke* of their *generation.*

6. God hath *peculiar honour wherewith he will crowne thoſe perſons that follow him in the worke of their generation* *Moſes* was eminent in his *generation*, and what peculiar *honour* had God for *Moſes*, *Numb.* 12. 6, 7, 8. *If there be a Prophet among you, I the Lord will make my ſelfe knowne unto him in a viſion, and will ſpeake unto him in a dream. My ſervant Moſes is not ſo, who is faithfull in all my houſe. With him will I ſpeake mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in darke ſpeeches, and the ſimilitude of the Lord ſhall he behold.* In the day of Chriſts humiliation the Diſciples of all other were moſt eminent in following and owning of Chriſt, and what peculiar honour hath Chriſt for them above others. *Matth.* 19. 28. *Verily, I ſay unto you, that yee which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man ſhall ſit in the Throne of his glory, yee alſo ſhall ſit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Iſrael.*

5. *Neglect of generation worke expoſeth a man to a world of dangers:* as

1. Danger of *loſing gifts and Talents.* The ſloathfull Servant, mentioned in the Parable, *Matth.* 25. not improoving the *Talent* given him to his Lords *advantage* in his *generation*, hath his *Talent* taken from him, *ver.* 28.

Saul (though a wicked man) had two great *Talents* committed to him by God, a *Talent* of a Kingdome, and a *Talent* of common gifts of the Spirit, fitting him for government, and the diſcharge of his office as a King, which laſt is called the *Spirit of the Lord*, yet but a common *Talent* of government, as is cleare, becauſe *David* is no ſooner anointed King, and the right of Government his, but this *Talent* is taken from *Saul*, as one who now had no longer to do with it, 1 *Sam.* 16. 13, 14. Both theſe he loſeth by faultring in the *worke* of his *generation*, as comp. 1 *Sam.* 15. 26. 28. with *Chap.* 16. 14.

2. Danger of *loſing communion with God.* Whilſt *David* was abroad in the field hewing down Gods enemies round about him, which was the maſter-peece of *worke* God allotted him in his *generation*, what ſweet triumphant *communion* had he with God, a cleare teſtimony whereof is, *Pſal.* 108. (a Pſalme moſt probably compoſed in the day of his glorious exploits, chronicled, 2 *Sam.* 8.) But afterwards when *David* ſending forth his Servan about that *worke*, which was his *worke* in his

gene-

generation, betakes himſelfe to his eaſe in his Palace, at the time of Kings going forth to battle, 2 *Sam.* 11. 1. (which circumſtance of time is therefore (I take it) with ſuch exactneſs noted, to give us to underſtand, that *David* ought now to have been abroad in perſon, the *worke* being Gods, and not to have ſent his Servants without him, (though we may do our own *worke* by a Proxie, yet Gods *worke* calls for our perſons) how ſadly doth he loſe his *communion with God*, falling into that foule ſin in the matter of *Uriah*, which was a blemiſh upon this holy man all his life time afterwards: and which although it is ſad to conſider, yet is obſervable concerning him that notwithſtanding God by his prerogative royall, gave *David* not onely the pardon of his ſin, but alſo his life, (which now by bloudſhed, though a King, was by vertue of that poſitive command, which admits of no exception, *Gen.* 9. 6. forfeited,) as 2 *Sam.* 12. 13. *The Lord hath put away thy ſin, thou ſhalt not die.* Yet do we not read of any thing remarkeable, (ſave onely defending himſelfe againſt ſome domeſtick inſurrections, and forraigne invaſions) done by him afterwards, as before.

So alſo *Solomon* his Son, whilſt his thoughts ran upon the *worke* of his *generation*, what *communion* had he with God, God appearing

to him once and againe, and enduing him with *wiſdome* (the thing he deſired) above all that ever were before or ſince him: but when afterwards his heart was more taken up with women, then the *worke* of his *generation*, how did his former *communion with God* die, and he that before built a houſe for the worſhip of the true God, now builds high places for Idolatry, 1 *Kings* 11. 7, 8. Which ſad example, ought to be had in perpetuall remembrance by ſuch as are employd in *Temple worke*, (the buſines of this *age*) that it fare not with them as with the builder of the materiall Temple, who firſt building Gold to the true God, did afterwards build ſtubble to a falſe.

3. Danger of *being laid aſide by God.* It hath been the ordinary way of Gods *diſpenſations*, as well in later as former times, to make uſe of ſome particular inſtrument for ſome time in his *worke*, whom afterwards before the *worke* hath been brought unto perfection he hath *laid aſide*, by which although (as not unlikely) Gods *deſigne* may be to remoove his peoples eyes from inſtruments to himſelfe, yet it is obſervable, God hath ſeldome or never *caſhiered* a man by him employd, till firſt by ſome meanes or other he hath *caſhiered* himſelfe: and which is more to be noted, the very thing which hath occaſioned the *laying*

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of ſuch inſtruments *aſide*, hath moſtly, if not ever been, ſome miſcarriage or other in the *worke* of their *generation*, that being the fatall Rock ſuch men ſplit upon.

Once more here let us review that of *Saul*, whom God was pleaſed for ſome time to employ, as a ſcourge to the *Ammonites*, and *Philiſtines*, and yet afterwards by one error committed in the *worke* of his *generation*, he is for ever *caſhiered* by God, and put out of his *worke*.

But more ſtrange and worthy obſervation is that of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, two eminent inſtruments, and both godly, which God made ſingular uſe of in *Egypt*, and at the Red Sea, in the wildernes, and upon Mount *Sinai*, ſo appearing to them, talking with them, eſpecially to *Moſes*, as never man beſides him enjoyd the like, yet theſe two ſo choiſe & worthy inſtruments becauſe they failed a little in the *worke* of that *generation*, which was (as before was ſhowne) *to beleeve in God, and truſt his power and goodnes*, although their failing was at ſuch a time, (which one would judge might render them excuſable, at leaſt leſſe guilty) wherein the whole Congregation erred with them, and (as it were) did hurry them into it; yea and for *Moſes* he never failed but this time, ſo that (this once excepted) he all along had *followed God fully*. Yet I

ſay becauſe they failed God in that *worke*, which was the *worke* of the *generation*; they for that and no other reaſon are laid by as to the perfecting of that *worke* (*viz.* bringing of *Iſrael* into *Canaan*) which moſt happily, and proſperouſly was begun and carried on a great way, under them as inſtruments, as *Numb.* 20. 12. *And the Lord ſpake unto Moſes and Aaron, becauſe yee beleeve me not, to ſanctifie me in the eyes of the children of Iſrael, therefore yee ſhall not bring this Congregation, into the land which I have given them.* So exceedingly diſpleaſing to God, are errors in the *worke* of our *generation*, that he will not let ſuch things paſſe, no not in his deareſt children, without ſome ſignall manifeſtation of his *diſpleaſure*. And which I cannot let paſſe without a farther marke yet ſet upon it, as a thing moſt worthy the ſerious thoughts of every one, and ſuch in eſpeciall whom God above others hath uſed and honoured in the *worke* of the *generation*, is, how that one ſingle failing in the *worke* of the *generation* may cauſe a *Moſes* to be laid aſide.

4. Danger of *Stumbling at the worke of the generation, and all the diſpenſations of God about it.* The *Jewes* in Chriſts time they neglect the *worke* of their *generation*, which was to *beleeve in Chriſt, and receive him as the true Meſſiah*, whoſe coming their Nation was in expectation

pectation of, and the very *worke* it ſelfe (through this neglect) became *a ſtumbling ſtone* to them: they *ſtumble at it* to thinke they ſhould receive this man for their Meſſiah: and *ſtumbling* at the *worke*, they likewiſe *ſtumble* at the ſeverall *diſpenſations* of God about it. Chriſt comes of meane Parentage, they *ſtumble* at that: appeares firſt from *Galilee*, they *ſtumble* at that; workes miracles, they *ſtumble* at that: is followed by Publicans and ſinners, they *ſtumble* at that; commits the Goſpel to poore fiſhermen, they *ſtumble* at that: Neglect the *worke* of thy *generation*, and *ſtumble* at it: *Stumble* at the *worke* of thy *generation*, and *ſtumble* at all the *diſpenſations* of God about it.

5. Danger of *being blinded in, or ſhut out of the worke of the next generation, in caſe thou live to ſee it.* For God in his juſt judgement when men have ſhut their eyes againſt, and withdrawne their hands from the *worke* of the preſent *generation*, doth blind theſe perſons to, and will not honour them in the *worke* of the following *generation*, though yet they may live to ſee it.

The Scribes and Phariſees wilfully ſhut their eyes to the *worke* of *Johns generation*, and what followed? they ſee afterwards the *work* of Chriſts in his *generation*, and of the Apoſtles in theirs, and through the juſt judge-

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ment of God upon them, their eyes are *ſhut*, and they are *blinded* there too.

A moſt pregnant place to our purpoſe we have, *Ezek.* 44. *ver.* 9. to 17. where under legall Phraſes, and alluſive termes, the Holy Ghoſt ſetting forth Goſpel worſhip, ſpeakes very pathetically of two ſorts of Prieſts, belonging to that Goſpel-ſtate. One were ſuch as had defiled themſelves with the pollutions of the former *generation*, by going aſtray to Idolls when *Iſrael* went aſtray, *ver.* 10. 12. who by way of puniſhment are to beare their iniquity, which is not, wholly to be turned out of the *worke* of God, who will ſtill uſe them in the generall and more common acts of his worſhip, as *ver.* 11. 14. but to be ſet by as to the more ſpeciall and peculiar acts of his worſhip in the *generation*, becauſe they polluted themſelves with the Idolatries, and ſuperſtitions of the former *generations*, as *ver.* 12, 13. Another ſort of Prieſts there are who when *Iſrael* and their fellow labourers went aſtray, and defiled themſelves by Idolatry, did notwithſtanding walk cloſely with God, keeping their Garments pure from the defilements of that *generation*, theſe are priviledged to draw neere to God in the more ſpeciall acts of his worſhip, to come into his Sanctuary, and performe the ſervice (not of the outward Court onely, but) of his Table; as *ver.* 15, 16.

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The difference betwixt theſe is worthy yet a more ſearch. The one have the charge of the gates of the houſe, *ver.* 11. the other Gods charge in his houſe, *ver.* 16. the one ſhall onely kill the burnt offering and ſacrifice for the people, *ver.* 11. the other ſhall ſtand before God to offer the fat, and the bloud, *ver.* 15. The one ſhall ſtand before the people to miniſter to them, *ver.* 11. the other ſhall come neere to Gods Table to miniſter to him, *ver.* 16. The one ſhall beare all this as their ſhame for their former abominations, *ver.* 13. the other ſhall receive all this honour as a reward for their not partaking in the abominations of the former *age*, ver. 15, 16.

The reſult of all is clearely this, that ſuch perſons who have plaid looſe with God in the former *generation*, though live they may to ſee the next *generation*, and be employd in ſome common *workes*; yet will not God uſe them, in the ſpeciall *workes* of that *generation*, except ſuch of them that ſhall renounce their former pollutions, of which more hereafter.

6. Danger of *becomming an Apoſtate, and an open Enemie to the truths of God. Demas* forſakes *Paul*, and the *worke* of his *generation*, and what follows? he becomes an *Apoſtate*, and exchangeth Heaven for Earth, embracing this preſent world.

In

In the Apoſtles dayes the great *work* of that *generation* was *the conſtituting of Churches, and Saints aſſembling themſelves together for mutuall edification in Chriſtian ſocieties:* and if you mind it, the Apoſtle layes the riſe of that Soule-damning Sin of wilfull *Apoſtacy* in a neglect of this, *Heb.* 10. 25, 26. *Not forſaking the aſſembling of our ſelves together, as the manner of ſome is: For if wee ſin wilfully*——

And which I cannot heere paſſe over, that unpardonable ſin, againſt the Holy Spirit, which our Saviour himſelfe chargeth the Scribes and Phariſees with, took (as is apparent) its riſe hence: for firſt they neglect the *work* of their *generation*, viz. of *receiving Chriſt*, this *neglect* drawes on an *oppoſition*; this *oppoſition*, *malice againſt Chriſt*; this *malice* brings forth *blaſphemy* againſt thoſe very *workes* of Chriſt, calling them *Diabolicall*, which their conſciences now and then convinced them, were wrought by the power of God; this malicious and deliberate blaſpheming of what their Conſciences, I ſay, now and then, (for they had apparent *ſtumbling blocks* before them, with which undoubtedly they did ſometimes blind Conſcience) convinced them was wrought by the finger of God, is that very ſin which Chriſt himſelfe calls the Sin againſt the Spirit, that hath neither forgivenes in this world, nor that which is to come,

come, *Matth.* 12. *verſ.* 24. comp. with *verſ.* 31, 32.

Let all hence tremble to oppoſe, or reproach the apparant *workes* of God in their *generation*, leſt——

Now to conclude, whoſe eares hearing theſe things would not tingle? whoſe heart conſidering theſe things would not quake, to be found guilty of the ſin, and expoſed to the *dangers* that attend neglect of *generation worke*

Thus much concerning our third generall Head: I now come unto our fourth, which is,

4. *Wherein doth the worke of this preſent generation lie?*

Anſ. As the queſtion is very weighty, and of great concernment, being the Butt aymed at in my whole diſcourſe, ſo that in the diſcuſſion hereof, I may in the fear of God walk evenly, and (without winding or turning to any intereſt, ſave that of truth) pitch (if poſſible) upon that which is the proper and direct work of the *generation we live in*; it will be neceſſary in order thereunto, to lay down ſome few generall Rules, as way-marks, to guide the Reader, to the diſcovery of that which is the proper *worke* of his *generation*; whatſoever *generation* he may be ſuppoſed to live in; which when particularly applied to the

the preſent *generation*, will give us light into what is or may be the proper *worke* or *works* thereof, as,

1. *Be inquiſitive to finde out* (*according to Scripture account*) *the particular age or generation it ſelfe, that it is fallen to thy lot to live in:* which though it be hard to do, yet in regard the wiſdome of God in Scripture hath ſet ſome diſtinct and notifying mark upon every *age*, the ſame by induſtry, and waiting upon the Father of lights, for light, may be attained.

2. The former being done, adde thereunto *a narrow and impartiall ſearch for diſcovery of thoſe glorious and remarkable things, the accompliſhment of which, God in his word hath promiſed and foretold, in and about this age.*

In this way the holy man *Daniel* came to *underſtand* the *worke* of his *generation*; Firſt, he conſidered the *time* he lived in, to to be about the end of the 70. years captivity foretold by *Jeremie*.

2. He obſerves that there was a ſpeciall *promiſe* of deliverance from this captivity made to thoſe *times*, Chap. 9. 2. whereupon having diſcovered the *worke*, hee addreſſeth himſelfe to God by prayer for the doing of it, *verſ.* 3, 4.

3. Obſerve *Gods viſible diſpenſations towards that age, and the various tranſactions of things therein,*

therein, how they correſpond with the things foretold and promiſed.

4. Obſerve *what worke that is which is moſt oppoſed and raged againſt by Satan, and wicked men in the generation.* For it is moſt certaine that the *work* of the *generation* (Gods cauſe & glory wch above all things Satan hates, being there imbarqued) hath ever been the moſt oppoſed *worke* by the Devill and his inſtruments. Was it not ſo in *Moſes* his time, *Nehemiah's* time, *John Baptiſts* time, the Apoſtles time, and ſince that in *Luthers* time. I ſpare to ſay, and in our times too?

5. Obſerve *what (not men of worldly wiſdome and principles, but) the moſt ſpirituall enlightned Saints, have upon their hearts as the work of their generation.* For from the beginning it hath been Gods way to make choiſe of ſuch for the diſcovery of *generation worke* unto before all others.

The old world had its *wiſe men*, and men of *rare inventions*, Gen. 4. 20, 21, 22. Yet not theſe, but *righteous Noah ſaw the worke of the generation.* Ægypt in the time of *Moſes* was famous for its *wiſe men*, as alſo *Babylon* in *Nehemiah's*, yet neither the one nor the other ſaw the *worke* of thoſe *generations*, but only a poor handfull of deſpiſed people that God had in either. *Judea* in Chriſts time was plentifully ſtored with *learned* Scribes, Doctors,

Doctors and Rabbies, yet not theſe, but a company of poor diſregarded Fiſhermen had the *worke* of that *generation* revealed to them. This, though alone it be not ſufficient to conclude the *worke*, yet when joyned with the reſt, credit undoubtedly ought to be given to it.

6. And laſtly, *Be much in prayer to God for light herein.* The great *worke* of the Apoſtles *generation*, *viz.* The bringing in of the *Gentiles* was revealed to *Peter* and *Paul* both, even whilſt they were in prayer, as *Acts* 10. 9, 10. with *Chap.* 22. 17. 21.

Having thus by this generall light paved out a way to walk in. My next *worke* is to ſee what particular light, by applying theſe things unto the preſent *age*, may from hence be gained into the *worke* thereof.

And here according unto the method before preſcribed, our firſt enquiry muſt be after the *age* it ſelfe. *What age is that moſt likely to be, that we are fallen into.*

In anſwer to which my Aſſertion is, *that it is moſt probable that we are fallen into that very age, in which the Jewes are to be converted.*

Now although here I muſt nakedly acknowledg that I could heartily wiſh, for their ſakes, whoſe this little Book is, yet clearer and more unqueſtionable grounds for the proof of this my Aſſertion, then thoſe

that

that this opinion commonly ſtands upon: yet in regard I know no clearer principle to demonſtrate (for bare conjectures are no proofs) the *worke* of the *generation* from, then this taken for granted, that *we are fallen into that age in which the Jewes ſhall be converted*; and alſo in regard it is received for a truth (and ſo in caſe of miſtake I ſhall not be the firſt) by many late Chriſtian Writers of worthy memory, yea with much confidence aſſerted by the *Jewes* themſelves, though under another notion, then [redacted] what we truly call it of converſion to Chriſt as *Manaſſeh Ben Iſrael*, in his Book entituled, *The hope of Iſrael*, Sect. 29. 32. 35, 36. is proof; I ſhall therefore endeavour to give you (with as much clearneſſe and brevity as I may) the ſubſtance of that light, which by the labours of godly judicious men, hath been let into that Scripture, which is maine bottom to this opinion, leaving the Reader to judge, and a little time to manifeſt the verity or falſity of what is written, the which we have, *Dan.* 12. *ver.* 1. comp. with 11, 12. where *Daniel* hath a promiſe made to him of his peoples *deliverance*, and that at a certaine time when *Michael* ſhould ſtand up, *at that time ſhall thy people be delivered*; (which words (as I conceive) comprehend both the beginning, and conſummation of their deliver-

Bright man. Archer.

ance, to which two distinct times are assigned, as afterwards.) Now because this thing was a great *secret*, and *Daniels* affection to Gods glory, and the good of his own people, transported him with desire to know the particular time, he therefore moves the Question, *When shall this be? How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?* vers. 6. Answer hereto is made so darkly, that *Daniel* heares, but understands not; & therfore although in words far different, yet (as by the following answer appears) aiming still at the same thing he puts the Question again: *What shall be the end of these things?* Answer then is made to *ver.* 11, 12. *And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety dayes. Blessed is hee that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty dayes.* The meaning whereof seems to be this, that the beginning of the *delivery* of *Daniels* peoples (*viz.* the *Jewes*) should fall out *a thousand two hundred and ninety dayes* (*i. e.* so many yeares, a day for a yeare being the Scripture account, as *Numb.* 14. 34. *Ezek.* 4. 4, 5, 6.) *after the taking away of the daily sacrifice, and the setting up the abomination that maketh desolate, and* 45. *yeares after that* (for so many days hath the second number more then the first) *that great trouble,*

trouble, which the Scripture not onely here, but elſewhere ſo plentifully reveals (as *Ezek. Chap.* 37, 38, 39. *Joel* 3. 1, 2. *Zach. Chap.* 12. and 14. 1, 2.) *will attend that people in their beginning to ſeeke the Lord, and David their King, ſhall they be delivered from by the ſtanding of Michael their Prince,* as *verſ.* 1. Which becauſe till that day their deliverance (though began before) ſhall not be compleated, therefore is the bleſſing annexed not to the firſt, but to the latter time. *Bleſſed is hee that waiteth and cometh to the* 1335. *dayes.*

The great knot here is (for the untying of which more light would be welcome) *When the taking away of the daily ſacrifice, & the ſetting up of the abomination that maketh deſolate* (which is to be the head of our account) *had its accompliſhment*, and here the variety of mens judgments hath brought forth various conjectures, which not in this place to ſcan, I ſhall pitch on that which ſeems to carry greateſt probability of truth with it, which is the opinion of thoſe that bring it down to *Julians* time, [illegible] fixing upon (as the mark they begin their account at) that particular act of his of endeavouring (by ſetting the *Jewes* thereabouts) the re-edifying the Temple at *Ieruſalem*, and ſo thereby in malice and oppoſition to Chriſt and Chriſtian worſhip, to reſtore Judaiſme, and Jewiſh wor-

ſhip; at which time a fearfull Earth-quake in the night did overturn all that they had built in the day, yea threw the very foundation ſtones of the Temple out of their places, which before had never been removed.

Now the reaſons why a fixation here is rather to be choſen, then any where elſe, are,

1. Becauſe if we make any other act ſince Chriſt before this, the Head of our account, *the time is already expired*, and yet the *Jewes* not delivered.

2. Becauſe, *No act whatſoever could more* [illegible] *agree to the words themſelves*; then *this of* Julians, *which was an abomination of the higheſt to endeavour the ſetting up of Jewiſh worſhip, when God had thrown it downe; and that out of a deſigne to throw downe Chriſtian worſhip which God had ſet up:* and ſuch an abomination as brought a deſolation, and an utter removall of the daily ſacrifice, the *Temple-ground*, the only place of ſacrifice, being at this time loſt. For although the daily ſacrifice did ceaſe before from *Titus* time, by whom the Temple was ruined, as it alſo did all the time that *Iſrael* was in *Babylon*, whilſt the firſt Temple lay waſt, yet properly could it not either then or now, nor no more now then than, be ſaid to be taken away, becauſe the *Temple-ground*, to which (as the only holy place) the

the Jewiſh worſhip was tied, whereon a *new Temple* might be built, was ſtill remaining. But at this time, not onely the foundation-ſtones being thrown up, but the very *Temple-ground* being loſt in the Earth-quake, it is not improper to ſay, *the daily ſacrifice was taken way.*

3. This likewiſe ſeems beſt *to agree to the words of Chriſt himſelf concerning the deſtruction of the Temple*, Mat. 24.2. *There ſhall not be left one ſtone upon another which ſhal not be thrown downe.* For although the Temple was demoliſhed by *Titus*, yet the foundation ſtones did ſtill lie one upon the other; but now this act of *Iulians* brought ſuch a deſolation, that as the building was ruined formerly, ſo the very foundation now had *not a ſtone left upon a ſtone*; which punctually agrees to Chriſts own words.

And it is obſervable that Chriſt himſelfe makes this *ſetting up of the abomination of deſolation*, foretold by *Daniel*, the immediate fore-runner hereof, *verſ.* 3. comp. with 15. which according to what hath been ſaid, was both immediate fore-runner, and cauſe alſo.

Now for the preciſe time of this Helliſh exploit, there are amongſt Hiſtorians foure (how many more, I know not) different accounts of the particular yeare in which

the ſame was acted, though all I have hitherto ſeen or heard of, conclude it to be within the year of our Lord 360. or 367. yet whether or no through ſome miſtake in Cronologie the difference may not be ſomewhat wider, I cannot determine, though judge it very unlikely that it can, or ſhould be much.

Accounting therefore (that we may draw to a head) from the year 366. (and the rather, becauſe the very year *Daniels* firſt number of dayes, will from thence fall in with, is already made famous by generall expectations of ſome remarkable thing to be done therein) & the beginning of the *Jews delivery*, is likely to be, either in the year it ſelfe, or thereabouts of our Lord, for adding 366. (the ſuppoſed year of Chriſt, wherein *Iulian* did this) to *Daniels*, 1290. and there is made up the full ſumme (neither over nor under) of 1656. which if when that time ſhall come we ſee accompliſhed, we need not then make it a queſtion, whether 45. years after their deliverance ſhall be compleated, or not, *Daniel* having foretold, that in his laſt number of 1335. which he that ſhal take but 10. from the 300. and adde the ſame to the 35. will find that made up 45. and the foregoing number of 1290. to remain.

And becauſe this reckoning is but of later

times

times, it is not therefore to be rejected, but rather to be received; becauſe *Daniel* himſelf tells us, that the truth of this Propheſie was to be ſealed up till the time of the end, as *v.* 4. 9. which is alſo a manifeſt argument, that this cannot relate (unleſſe in a typical way) to the times and ſtory of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, as ſome godly and learned men would carry it.

If any by calling in doubt the thing it ſelfe, *viz. Whether ever ſuch a thing as the Iewes converſion ſhall be*; queſtion the whole: My anſwer to ſuch is, that could I with that cleareneſſe demonſtrate the time of it, as (through the Lords aſſiſtance) it is eaſie to doe the thing it ſelfe (were this the place for the doing thereof) I ſhould have ſuſpected my ſelf to have injured truth, had I dropped doubtfull words concerning the ſame.

Yet becauſe this anſwer is none at all, and I would not have any take bare words for Arguments, and yet am loath here, neither is it proper to ſtart the Queſtion; therefore ſetting aſide the joynt and concurrent teſtimony of every of the Prophets of the Old Teſtament (*Ionah* only excepted, which is rather a Hiſtory then a Prophecye) in this thing, the truth whereof is not much more difficult to prove, then to affirm: I ſhall only commend to ſuch that of *Paul*, Rom. 11.

who ſpeaks expreſly not of *ſpirituall*, but of *naturall Iewes*, whom therefore he all along oppoſeth to the *Gentiles*, calling them alſo *branches broken off*, which cannot be *ſpirituall* branches, but *naturall*, verſ. 21. and the ſame *broken off*, ſhall be *grafted in again*, v. 24. And this not done only one by one in continuance of time, but (according to that of *Iſa Chap.* 66. 8.) in a manner all at once, *ver.* 25, 26. And ſo all *Iſrael* ſhall be ſaved--which as yet we have never ſeen, and yet becauſe Scripture ſpeaks it are to believe it.

Thus according to preſent light (both of what I have received from others, and have been able to adde of my owne) a diſcovery of *the age we live in* hath beene made, and found to be that in which the great *worke of Iſraels redemption* is moſt likely to be effected.

2. Our next thing is (that we may walk in the path before laid downe) to obſerve what *thoſe glorious and remarkable things are, the accompliſhment whereof God hath foretold & promiſed in and about theſe times.*

And here give me leave to ſay, that when I take a view of what holy Scripture hath recorded of that time in which Iſrael ſhall return to their own Land, and alſo to the Lord, and *David* their King, that I do finde this *age* (none more) *full of wonders*; to all which,

which, Gods glorious *worke* of *redeeming Sion*, literall Sion, or the *Iewes* from their long captivity; and *ſpirituall* Sion, or the *Gentile* Churches, from Antichriſtian bondage (is as it were) the Axis upon which they turne.

Now to enumerate each particular of thoſe tranſactions that Scripture tells us ſhall fall out in this *age*, is not my intent, but only to take notice of ſome of the chief, (and ſuch as are moſt free from exception) for the directing of us to that which is our ſpeciall *worke* in this *generation*. Which are,

1. Iſrael's *Redemption*; which although by mentioning here againe, I may ſeeme to tautologize, yet muſt I doe it, this being the firſt and great thing promiſed, which therefore we have before proved, and made uſe of as a mark to deſcry the reſt by.

2. *A large and plentifull converſion of Gentiles to the Lord*, as *Iſa.* 2. 3. Many people ſhall ſay, *Come yee, let us goe up to the mountaine of the Lord*--- Which that it relates to the time in and about which the *Iewes* ſhall be converted is clear, *verſ.* 5. *O houſe of Jacob* (*i. e.* ye *Iewes*, as diſtinguiſhed from the Nations before ſpoken of) *Come yee, and let us walke in the light of the Lord.* And yet more clear, *Mica* 4. 2. comp. with *verſ.* 6. 7. So

Iſa.

Eſay 60. 3, 4, 5. *Lift up thine eyes round about and ſee, all they gather themſelves together, they come to thee — the abundance of the Sea (or Nations) ſhall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles ſhall come unto thee.* Which that it is ſpoken of the *Jewes* is cleare, becauſe they are diſtinguiſhed from the *Gentiles*; and that the time of their *redemption* is here ſpoken of, appeares, if you looke back to *Chap.* 59. 20. comp. with *Rom.* 11. 26, So *Zach.* 2. 11. *Many nations ſhall be joyned to the Lord in that day*— What day is that? See, *ver.* 12. *When the Lord ſhall inherit Judah his portion in the holy Land, and ſhall chooſe Jeruſalem againe.* So *Zech.* 8. 20, 21, 22, 23. To all which adde, *Rom.* 11. 25, 26. where the Apoſtle ſpeaking of the *converſion* of the *Jewes*, mentions alſo a *fulnes* of the *Gentiles* about that time comming in.

3. *Uniting Saints that differ.* Zech. 14. 9. *In that day ſhall there be one Lord, and his name one?* And when ſhall this be? why, then, *when all Nations ſhalbe gathered together againſt Jeruſalem to battle*, as *ver.* 2. So *Zepha.* 3. 9. *I will turne to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the Name of the Lord, to ſerve him with one conſent.* Diviſion of languages made a diviſion of men, but when Gods people ſhall come to have a *pure, unbroken language*, all to ſpeak *one* and the *ſame thing*, diviſion amongſt Saints ſhall ceaſe, and there ſhall be *union*: but when

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ſhall this be? See, ver. 20. *At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I will gather you, for I will make you* (i. e. *Iſrael*, diſtinguiſhed from other people) *a name, and a praiſe among all people of the earth, when I turne back your captivity before your eyes, ſaith the Lord.* So *Eſay* 11. 13. *The envie of Ephraim ſhall depart, and the adverſaries of Judah be cut of: Ephraim ſhall not envie Judah, and Judah ſhall not vexe Ephraim.* When ſhall this be? the foregoing verſe tells us-- *He ſhall aſſemble the outcaſts of Iſrael, and gather together the diſperſed of Judah, from the foure corners of the earth.* So *Chap.* 54. 13. *All thy children ſhall be taught of the Lord, and great ſhall be the peace of thy Children,* (which may as well be underſtood of outward, as inward peace, for *all being taught of God*, they ſhall not jar amongſt themſelves.) But when ſhall this be? why, then, when as the *Jewes* which now are barren, as a widdow, and a wife of youth refuſed, as ver. 1. 4. 6, ſhall be received *into favour* againe.

4. *Pulling downe of high and lofty things:* under which as principall, or Head we are to comprehend the *man of Sin*, or *Romiſh Antichriſt*, Iſai. 2. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. 17. *The lofty looks of man ſhall be humbled, and the haughtines of men ſhall be bowed downe, and the Lord alone ſhall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hoſtes ſhall be upon every one that is proud and*

and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he ſhall be brought low. And upon all the Cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the Oakes of Baſhan. And upon all the high mountaines, and upon all the hills that are lifted up. And upon every high Tower, and upon every fenced wall, and upon all the Ships of Tarſhiſh, and upon all pleaſant pictures. And the loftines of man ſhall be bowed downe, and the haughtines of men ſhall be made low: and the Lord alone ſhall be exalted in that day.

The meaning of all theſe metaphoricall expreſſions is onely this, *That at this time the day of the Lord, the day of the Lord ſhall be upon all the ſtrength and glory of the Creature, upon all high and lofty things and perſons, that exalt themſelves above the Lord Chriſt, to the pulling of them downe.* But when ſhall this be? then *when the mountaine of the Lords houſe ſhall be exalted above the hills, and all Nations ſhall flow unto it*, ver. 2. the time (as even now was proved) of the *Jewes converſion*. So Eſay 24. 21. *And it ſhall come to paſſe in that day, that the Lord ſhall puniſh the hoſt of the high ones that are on high, and the Kings of the Earth, upon the Earth.* When ſhall this be? See *ver.* 23-*When the Lord of hoſts ſhall raigne in mount Sion, and in Jeruſalem, and before his ancients* (the people of ancient times choſen, and in Covenant with him) *gloriouſly*. So *Chap.* 30. laſt. -*Tophet* (the pit of deſtruction)

tion) *is ordained of old, yea for the King it is prepared* -- The meaning is, not onely an eternall (as ſome carry it) but *temporall* ruine ſhall attend great ones. But when ſhall this be? To that I anſwer; Although in the type it was fulfilled upon *Senacherib* King of *Aſſyria* and his Armies; yet the whole Chapter, eſpecially from *ver.* 18. hath relation to another time, which is that we are ſpeaking of, of the *Jewes converſion*, as is evident, *ver.* 19. *For the people ſhall dwell in Sion at Jeruſalem: thou ſhalt weepe no more.* But more cleare, *ver.* 26. *The light of the Moone ſhall be as the light of the Sun -- In the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the ſtroke of their wound.*

5. *The eſtabliſhment of Juſtice and righteouſnes in the world*, as *Eſay* 1. 26, 27. *And I will reſtore thy Judges as at the firſt; and thy Counſellours as at the beginning: afterwards thou ſhalt be called the Citie of righteouſnes, the faithfull Citie. Zion ſhall be redeemed with judgement, and her Converts with righteouſnes.* Chap. 54. 14. *In righteouſnes ſhalt thou be eſtabliſhed: thou ſhalt be far from oppreſſion* -- So Chap. 60. 18--*I will make thine Officers peace, and thine exactours righteouſneſſe. Violence ſhall no more be heard in thy Land, waſting nor deſtruction within thy borders; but thou ſhalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates praiſe.* Theſe places (as already hath been

been ſhewne) looking all to the time of the *Jewes redemption.*

6. *The powring out of more abundance of the Spirit,* Joel 2. 28. *And it ſhall come to paſſe afterward, that I will powre out of my Spirit upon all fleſh* — When ſhall this be? even then, *when in Mount Sion, and in Jeruſalem ſhall be deliverance,* as *ver.* 32. or more clearely, then *when God ſhall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jeruſalem,* as *Chap.* 3. 1. For although Peter (*Acts* 2.) ſpeakes of theſe words as fulfilled in his time, yet was that onely in the beginning, the *powring* down of the *Spirit* then being not ſo *generall* as that heere promiſed, and that which ſhall be upon the comming in of the *Jewes.* So *Zech.* 12. 10. *And I will powre upon the houſe of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, the Spirit of grace and ſupplication.* So *Eſay* 32. 15. *Untill the Spirit be powred upon us from on high* - It is obſervable that the giving forth of the *Spirit* at this time is ſet both by this word of *powring,* noting *abũdance* that ſhal then be given forth, more then in former *ages.*

7. As an effect of the former, *Increaſe of light and grace*; as *Eſay* 30. 26. *Moreover, the light of the Moone ſhall be as the light of the Sun, and the light of the Sun ſhall be ſevenfold, as the light of ſeven dayes; in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the ſtroke of their wound.* Chap. 52. 8. *They ſhall ſee eye*

eye to eye (*i. e.* clearly) *when the Lord ſhall bring againe Sion.* See both, *Zech.* 12. 8-*He that is feeble in that day, ſhall be as David, and the houſe of David ſhall be as God, as the Angel of the Lord before them.* Which that it relates to the time of the *Jews call* the whole Chap. is proof.

8. *The exaltation of the Lord Chriſt alone as King. Iſa.* 2 11-*The Lord alone ſhall be exalted in that day.* Chap. 24. 23 - *The Lord of hoſtes ſhall reigne in mount Sion, and in Jeruſalem, and before his ancients gloriouſly.* Cap. 2. 3. 4-*Out of Sion ſhall go forth the Law, and the word of the Lord from Jeruſalem, And he ſhall judge among the Nations.* Zech. 14. 9. *The Lord ſhall be King over all the Earth* — All which places I have already proved to ſpeake of this time. So *Eſay* 33. 22-- *The Lord is our King, he will ſave us.* When is this? Anſ. then *when Jeruſalem ſhall be a quiet habitation.* ver. 20. *Looke unto Sion, the Citie of your ſolemnities: Thine eyes ſhall ſee Jeruſalem a quiet habitation* - Ezek. 37. 24. *And David my Servant* (Chriſt of whom *David* was type) *ſhall be King over them* - And to what time doth this looke? to that time in which *Iſrael* and *Judah* ſhall be gathered together, and brought to their own Land, and be made againe one Nation upon the mountaines of *Iſrael*, as *ver.* 21, 22.

Thus I have done with the ſecond thing, *viz.* the things foretold to be done in this age.

3. The

3. The third is to obſerve the *viſible diſpenſations of God towards the age wee live in:* and in caſe upon enquiry theſe be found to anſwer to what God hath foretold they ſhall be in that *age* in which the *Jewes ſhall be converted,* then this will not onely ſerve for diſcovery of the thing in hand, wherein the *worke* of this *generation* lies; but alſo adde a beame of light unto the former, viz. *That wee are fallen into that age in which the Jewes ſhall be converted.*

Onely here I would carry this along with me, that in regard as yet things are but comming on, therefore many things before this *generation* is over may be tranſacted which yet we ſee little of. But in caſe it appeare that tranſactions begin already to agree with the things foretold and promiſed, have we not ground then to hope (things comming on apace every day) that before this *generation* expires, wee ſhall ſee moſt, if not all fully accompliſhed.

Let us then compare what God hath *promiſed* to the *age* we ſpeake of with preſent *diſpenſations,* and ſee what way Gods *diſpenſations* are making, or have already made towards the *performance* of them.

1. For the *bringing in of the Jewes,* is not a faire way made to that already by that generall expectation they have of their Meſſias

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comming in this *age*, as *Menaſſeh Ben Iſrael* (before quoted) is witneſſe, *ſect.* 29. 35. as alſo by that light that at preſent is amongſt them (which the aforeſaid Author in ſeverall of his Sections declares) into many of thoſe prophecies of the old Teſtament which directly point at their *call*.

2. For the *Converſion of Gentiles*. Not to ſpeake of the great *converſions* of late neere home in poore *Wales*, and ſome parts of *Ireland*; and the hopefull way wee are in by the going out daily of poore deſpiſed labourers into the Lords vineyard of a large Harveſt: is it not admirable that in this *age*, and that within a few yeares each of other, the *Weſt* and *Eaſt Indies* both, ſhould be *enlightned with the Goſpel*, which never heard it before, verifying that, *Mal.* 1. 11. *For from the riſing of the Sun, even unto the going down of the ſame, my Name ſhall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incenſe ſhall be offered unto my Name, and a pure offering, for my Name ſhall be great among the Heathen, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.*

3. As for the *uniting of Saints that differ*, although heere with griefe wee muſt confeſſe the *breach* is yet too wide, yet what joy and comfort wee may alſo truly ſay it is not ſo wide as lately it was, many cloſing, and loving one another in moſt parts of the Nation, who five, nay two yeares agoe could not

do it: and if ſo little time have made ſuch a bleſſed beginning, what may we expect from more?

4. And as for *the pulling downe of high and lofty things*, if our *age* beare not witneſſe of this, it doth of nothing; for doth not the whole world ring againe with the noiſe that hath been made through the late fall of *Regall* and *Epiſcopall* powers in *England?*

5. For the *eſtabliſhment of juſtice and righteouſnes*, though we want in reſpect of what we would have, yet all unprejudiced perſons muſt nakedly confeſſe a good foundation to be already laid in order to the ſame, and as ſome hopefull beginnings thereupon, ſo our ſelves to be in a fairer way by far for more, then we were 16 or 20 yeares ago: which a little time wee hope will ripen to perfection.

6. And for the *powring out of the Spirit*, though it ought to be our griefe wee have ſo little of it, yet cannot Gods people in this *age*, without great ingratitude to the Father of mercies, but acknowledge that he hath herein alſo been more bountiful unto them, then unto others of his deare children, and their fellow ſervants in the foregoing *age*; though theſe then with that little they had, better, and more obedient to their Father, then wee now: and as we have ground for hope, ſo is it our duty to beleeve for yet more.

7. And

7. And as for *increaſe of light* (without tranſgreſſing the Rules of modeſty, or exalting our ſelves in this preſent *age*, in teſtification of our thankfulneſs to him from whom our light is) we may truly, and humbly ſay, that this preſent *age* hath brought forth ſome truths, eſpecially thoſe which concerne Chriſts Kingdome, which till now have not with that cleareneſſe been revealed in any ſince the Apoſtles times.

8. And Laſtly, For the *exaltation of Chriſt as King*, whenever was there a time (ſince the Apoſtles) that could ſhew halfe ſo many Churches as at this day are to be ſeene in *England*, and elſewhere? yea when ſince the beginning was Chriſt ever in ſo faire a way to be King over the world! and when ſo much worldly power in the hands of godly men as at this day!

So that in Gods *diſpenſations* to this *age*, we may already begin to read thoſe very things he hath *foretold* ſhall be in that *age* in which the *Jewes* ſhall be *converted*, which (as hath been before proved) is this *age* we live in.

And the more is this to be conſidered, becauſe *diſpenſation* being that which giveth call to the *worke* of the *generation*, it is enough, (ſuppoſing we had no other proofe) in caſe we behold preſent *diſpenſations*, pointing to ſuch and ſuch things, to know there lies the

worke of this *age*: yet in regard light burdens no man, and the lovers of truth are never offended with truth for its clearenesse, therefore this Rule (which alone gives so much light into the *worke*, as that it will be (as hath been before cleared) sin in that man, who wilfully shutting his eyes to the same neglects the *worke*) is here brought in, hand in hand with others, of no lesse evidence and demonstration then it selfe.

4. Our fourth Rule formerly laid downe, is to *observe what worke that is which is most raged against by the Devill and wicked men*, for ordinarily there (as was then proved) doth lie the *worke* of the *generation*. Now here consider what are those things the Devill *rageth* against, and the *world* fain would hinder in this *age*.

To omit the first because the *worke* not appearing as yet (though we hope God is making a way thereto) the Devill doth not as yet appeare openly (in this *age* more then formerly) for to *oppose* the same. But to come to the next.

Is not the *Conversion* of Sinners one thing *raged* against? Witnesse the many obstructions in the way of propagating the Gospel: the opposition to the Doctrine of glad tydings to Sinners therein revealed, and also to Godly men because Mechanicks, whom God

in many places with happy ſucceſſe is pleaſed in this nay to make uſe of, for declaring of them.

Is not the prevention of *union* amongſt Saints another, by fomenting diviſions through Jeſuiticall practices, and thereby drawing them into parties, and then ſetting one partie againſt the other?

And is not this another, the *pulling downe of high and lofty ones?* doth not the world generally ſtorme to ſee Kings and Biſhops plucked from their ſeats? *As one of their party ſaith, Had he had a hand in the pulling downe of Regall or Epiſcopall power, he ſhould thinke himſelfe to have committed the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt.*

And who knowes not the oppoſition that the *eſtabliſhment of juſtice and righteouſneſs meets with* at this day in the world?

Yea farther, is not the *Spirit* a thing mocked at, you have the Spirit; theſe are men of the Spirit, &c. And the very terme of *new light* is not onely diſtaſtefull, but reproachfull.

To conclude what wayes have been of late yeares to prevent and root out if poſſible *Chriſts Kingly Government in his Churches?* and are at this day to obſtruct the ſame, which is hoped to be now riſing over the world, is apparent to all men.

Thus we ſee that the very things Satan

til he establish and til he rageth
makes Jerusalem a praise in ye earth.

rageth againſt, are the ſame that the *Prophecies* of old have *foretold*, and the *diſpenſations* of God call for in this preſent *age*.

5. Wee have but one Rule of diſcovery more, (prayer excepted, which is Cloſet-worke) and that is to *obſerve what ſpirituall enlightned Saints have upon their hearts, as the worke of the generation.* And although heere I cannot enter into mens hearts, yet this I may ſay ſo far as my own acquaintance leads me, I have ever obſerved the pulſes of the moſt ſpiritual enlightned Saints beating this way: and the publique deſires of many for things of this nature, ſhewes how others ſtand inclined towards the doing of them.

Thus you may eaſily perceive whitherto all theſe Rules tend, each of which ſtanding upon firme ground, as hath been before declared.

The concluſion then (putting all together) is this; *That the worke of the preſent generation, which Saints are bound to attend unto, & be active in*, lies principally in theſe things. *The converſion of the Jews. Propagation of the Goſpell, in order to a greater harveſt of Gentiles. Joyning Saints (Chriſts myſticall body) into one. Pulling downe of all high and lofty things and perſons that oppoſe Chriſts. The eſtabliſhment of Juſtice and Righteouſneſſe in the world. Striving with God in a more eſpeciall manner for a greater degree*

degree of his ſpirit, more light and grace then Saints in former generations have had; together with the exaltation of Chriſt as King both in his Churches, and alſo over the world. Which laſt, conſidering how that all the reſt are in a way of ſubſerviency thereunto, and do as it were centre therein, for therefore are *Jews* and *Gentiles* at this time to meet together, as Subjects under one Prince, that this *Kingdom* of his might be great, and full of Subjects: therefore ſhall diviſions amongſt his people ceaſe, that his *Kingdome* might be quiet and peaceable; therefore ſhall *high and lofty ones be pulled downe*, that Chriſt might have no Competitor, or Check-mate (as I may ſay) in this his *Kingdome*; therefore ſhall *juſtice* and *righteouſneſſe* be eſtabliſhed, that ſo the glory of his *Kingdome* in this reſpect might ſurpaſſe the glory of all *Kingdomes* before it; therefore ſhall there be more of the *Spirit*, more *light* and *grace* given forth [illegible] to the Saints, that ſo they might yeeld *obedience* to their *King*, not ſo much from a Law without, as a principle of *light* & *love* within. I ſay all centring in this laſt, my utmoſt concluſion is, that the maſter-piece of *worke* in this *generation* is the *Advancement of the Kingdome of Jeſus Chriſt.*

5. But *how may I come to know or finde out that particular part, or parcell of worke, which is*

more properly my worke in my generation, and which God requires me to be active in? seeing it cannot be supposed that any one man can be active in the whole *worke*; neither undoubtedly is it required of him.

In answer to this I shall in generall lay downe this seeming contrary Proposition, *viz. That there is no part or peece of Generation-worke, but every Christian man or woman may in some way be helpfull thereunto; and so far as he may be helpfull, so farre is he called to act, and consequently becomes guilty of neglect of generation worke in not acting,* as,

1. By *prayer to God for the prospering and carrying on of the worke.* Those who can doe nothing else, are commanded *to pray for the peace of Jerusalem*, Psal. 122. 6. yea all that make mention of the Lord in the day of Gods building Sion, are bound not to *keepe silence, nor give God rest* till he *establish*, and till he make *Jerusalem a praise in the earth*, Isa. 62. 6, 7.

2. By *humbling our selves before God for that whatsoever it be, whether found in the people of God, or instruments employd in the worke, or any other, that proves obstructive, and a hinderance to the worke.* When the sin of *Achan* became an obstruction to the *worke* of *Ioshuah's age*, *Ioshuah* and the Elders of *Israel* rent their cloths, *fell to the earth on their faces, put dust on their heads,*

beads, *humbling* themſelves before God for it, *Ioſh.* 7. 6.

Now although acting in this manner (in caſe we can do nothing elſe) may ſeeme little in our eyes, yet in the eyes of God it doth not ſo, who takes it exceeding well at the hands of his people, when they can ſerve their *generation* no other way, that they doe it in this.

When *Iſrael* had ſo provoked God that God was upon the point of deſtroying of them, as *Deut.* 9. 12, 13, 14. *Moſes* then falls down before God 40. dayes, and 40. nights, and by *prayer* and *faſting* prevails with God, not only to ſpare them, but alſo by the manifeſtation of his preſence and glorious power, ſtill to go along with them, as *Exod.* 33. 14, 15. And how pleaſing *Moſes* prayer to God in this buſineſs was, appears, in that the glorious diſcovery of Gods back-parts to *Moſes*, and proclamation of his name before him (ſuch a diſcovery as never *Moſes* himſelfe at any other time, nor any man beſides him ever had) comes in as the *fruit* of this his *interceding* for the people, and in behalfe of the cauſe of God, as *Exo.* 33. 19. comp. with *Chap.* 34. 5, 6, 7. *Moſes* did many glorious *workes* in his *generation*, which others could not follow, yet God chooſeth to make his glory paſſe before him, not in doing them,

but

but that which every Saint may imitate him in.

Daniel in like manner, when as yet there was no viſible way for publique actings in that which now began to be the buſineſs of the *generation*, makes it his private work to ſtrive with God by *humiliation* and *prayer* for the ſame, as *Chap.* 9. and how well God did like hereof, you have heard before, and the ſucceſſe of *Daniels* prayer (*verſ.* 20, 21, 22, 23.) is ſufficient teſtimony.

So alſo *Nehemiah*, when the *worke* of his *age* lay out of his power to act any thing therein, ſave only in this way of *prayer* and *humiliation*, he as the other (this being the common way of Gods people in ſuch caſes) betakes himſelfe unto this *worke* of *praying* and *mourning* before God in reference to the ſame, *Nehem.* 1. 4, 5. &c. And how wonderfully God was pleaſed herewith, the ſequell of the ſtory ſhews, for within 4. months after (his *praying* and *mourning* being in the moneth *Chiſleu*, verſ. 1.) the ninth moneth according to the Jewiſh account, as *Zech.* 7. 1. in the 20. yeare of *Artaxerxes*, and the return thereof in the moneth *Niſan*, Chap. 2. 1. the firſt moneth after their account, as *Eſther* 3. 7. and all in in the ſame year, as by comp. *Chap.* 1. 1. with *Chap.* 2. 1. is evident) God in an extraordinary way doth ſo bring things

things about, that this *Nehemiah*, the *praying* and *mourning* man for *Ieruſalems* deſolations, is furniſhed with commiſſion and authority from the King to go to *Ieruſalem*, and there to re-edifie the City, and build up the wall thereof, the very *worke* of that *generation*.

In caſe therefore *generation worke* lie at ſuch a plunge as thou canſt act no other way in it; or in caſe thou beeſt one who wanteſt both opportunity and employment, wherein thou mayſt be helpfull in any particular way unto thy *generation*, then ſerve the ſame in this generall way, which ſervice from the hands of ſuch a one is accepted of God, and the party doing the ſame in Gods account, faithfull in his *generation*.

Yet becauſe many there be, who beſides the general way of acting (which is a *duty* common to all) may in other more ſpeciall ways be ſerviceable to their *generation*, who (yet neither their *call*, nor *opportunity* reaching to the whole *worke*, but ſome part of it) will be further inquiſitive how they ſhall know that *particular part of generation worke, which is more properly theirs*. To the end that ſuch may receive ſatisfaction in this thing, I ſhall deſire them to goe along with mee through theſe following Rules.

1. Obſerve *what part of generation work that is that thou art in a capacity to do*. Every man

is not in a *capacity* to do the ſame *peece of generation worke*, but one man is in a *capacity* to do one *peece* of the *worke*; another, another: and although the more publique and generall any mans employment is, the more he is in a *capacity* to do, yet is there no man unleſſe we could ſuppoſe ſome univerſall Officer over Nations and Churches, which might lawfully act in every mans ſphere, which is in a *capacity* to do the whole *worke*; Obſerve therefore what *worke* thou art in a *capacity* to do.

And here it will not be unneceſſary to take into our mature conſideration, the *place* and *ſtation* God hath ſet a man in, the ſpeciall *gift* a man may have, the *light* revealed to him, together with the *opportunities* that lie before him, either of which may put ſome men into a *capacity* beyond others, to act in ſome one buſineſſe of their *generation*, rather then another.

Now what work ſoever any of theſe, or all of them joyned together, doe put a man into a *capacity* of acting, the *diſpenſations* of that *age* calling to the performance of ſuch things (for in *generation worke* (as hath been proved) *diſpenſation* gives the *Call*) a man may ſafely conclude that to be his *worke* in his *generation*, which as Gods *diſpenſations* call him to, ſo God himſelf will either here

or

or hereafter ſtrictly require an account of him, how he hath done the ſame.

2. Obſerve *what worke that is amongſt thoſe things thou art in a capacity to do in thy generation, which the diſpenſations of God without, and the bent or inclination of thy Spirit within, at ſuch time as the ſame is moſt ſpirituall, or thou haſt moſt intimate communion with God, calls for the preſent doing thereof.* For it is moſt certaine, that every thing that a man is in a *capacity* to do, he is not called alike to the doing of. I may be in a *capacity* to do many things in my *generation*, and my *Call* to ſome of theſe things may be *greater*, to others *leſſe*: my *Call* may be to ſome for the *preſent*, to others for the *future*. Now to find out which of theſe my *Call* lies *firſt* unto, it is moſt neceſſarary to obſerve *which Gods diſpenſations call loudeſt for*, as that which is (as it were) the *hinge* upon which the reſt of the *worke* doth turne; and which if *neglected*, nothing elſe can, or is ever likely (as it ſhould be) to be done: to which, although the eſſence of the *Call* lies here; yet if alſo here be added (rather as matter of inducement, then a bottome for a *Call*) this other obſervation, *How my ſpirit ſtands at ſuch times when I am moſt ſpirituall, moſt diſingaged from private intereſts, and moſt intimately familiar with God, and moſt reſolved to follow him* (which are the ordinary

dinary times of the holy Spirits ſpeaking) *to the attempting of theſe things*; and if then I find the *impulſe* of my ſoule ſtrongly bending and inclining that way, that the *diſpenſations* of God would lead me; I may then conclude the *diſpenſations of God without, and the Spirit of God within, as in themſelves they ever agree, ſo alſo now in witneſſing the ſelf-ſame thing to me,* that here doth lie that ſpecial peece of worke, which amongſt the things I am in a *capacity* to doe, God *calls* aloud for the *preſent* doing of.

The *Call* of a *diſpenſation* without (*viz.* Gods being riſen to deliver his people) and an *impulſe* of *Spirit* within, putting man-like courage into a woman, was the only thing moved *Jael* to attempt that dangerous, yet memorable act of ſlaying *Siſera*, Judg. 5. 24, 25.

Yea what other *Call* the Judges of *Iſrael*—who (*Deborah* the Propheteſſe excepted) were not Prophets, for the holy Ghoſt calls them *Judges*, and that in a way of diſtinction from Prophets, *He gave them Judges about the ſpace of* 450. *yeares, untill Samuel the Prophet*, Acts 13. 20. Yea after *Moſes*, *Samuel* (of a man) is the firſt Prophet extraordinarily gifted we read of, as *Acts* 3. 24. *Yea all the Prophets from Samuel, and thoſe* that follow after: I ſay what *Call* theſe Judges had

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(only *Gideon*, *Sampſon*, and *Deborah* that we read of, having extraordinary *Call*, except the *Call* of a *diſpenſation*, the bondage Gods people were in, and a *ſecret impulſe of Spirit* wrought in them by the Lord, ſtirring them up to endeavour their deliverance: I cannot my ſelf determine, and therefore leave the doing thereof to others.

3. Obſerve *what peece of Generation-worke that is, which when thou haſt ventured on it, thou haſt found God moſt eminently appearing to thee for thy encouragement, and alſo with thee for aſſiſtance in doing of it; and know that the proſecution of that is properly thy worke in thy generation.* *Joſhuah's* ſpeciall and principall *worke* in his *generation*, was the rooting out tht *Canaanites*, and it was in this *worke* that God did moſt *eminently appeare* to *Joſhuah*, both for encouragement in the beginning of the enterpriſe, as *Ch.* 1. 5, 6. and with his aſſiſtance carrying of it on, untill the ſame was perfected, as the ſtory ſhews us.

4. Obſerve *wt piece of generation work that is which thou being in a capacity to do, in doing of art likely to meet with greateſt oppoſition, & that from all hands, and ſticke to that as thy worke in thy generation.* Chriſt when he was here on earth, had two great *works*, the one relating to his *Propheticall Office*, which was to publiſh the glad tidings of ſalvation; the other to his

his *Prieſtly*, which was to die for poor ſinners. In the firſt of theſe he is *oppoſed* both by the Devill, the world, and a profeſſing party; and in the laſt by one from whom one would leaſt expect it, even his beloved Diſciple *Peter*, acted by Satan to *oppoſe* him in this *worke*.

5. Obſerve *what peece of generatian worke that is which when thou haſt had a call, an opportunity, and an inclination to doe it, and haſt not ſet about the ſame, God hath preſently withdrawne himſelfe.*

Gods uſuall way is to check his peoples neglects, eſpecially in *generation worke* by *withdrawing himſelfe*, as hath been fully cleared, in the foregoing diſcourſe under that branch diſcovering the danger of neglecting *generation worke* in reſpect of our loſſe of *communion with God* thereby. If therefore ſuch *with-drawing* thou art, or haſt been ſenſible of: and theſe to grow upon ſuch neglects (leſt there come a greater after-clap, this being but Gods warning-piece) mingle better then yet thou haſt done, that *worke*, upon neglect whereof thou haſt ſenſibly found theſe *with-drawings*, and know the ſame is properly thy *worke* in thy *generation*.

6. Obſerve *what peece of generation worke that is, which putting caſe thou wert to die, would make moſt for thy comfort if done, and moſt for*

thy

thy diſcomfort if neglected. Some *worke* there is which men have to do for God in their *generations*, which if the Meſſenger of Death ſhould come, and the ſame not done, the heart would cry, *O ſpare me a little, that I may recover my ſtrength, to do this and the other worke not yet done by me as it ſhould, before I go hence, and be no more ſeene.* Now know this for certaine that that *worke* which if I were now to die would afflict me becauſe not done, is my *preſent worke* without delay to do: for that which I find will farther my joy in death, I may conclude is my *duty* in my life; and if a *duty* in my life, and onely lifes preſent time is certaine to me, then may I aſſure my ſelfe it is my *preſent worke*; the neglect whereof as no pretence how ſpecious ſoever can excuſe it, ſo the doing thereof will admit of no delayes, though there may ſeeme ever ſo great cauſe in reaſon for the ſame. O have not then that *worke* to do at death, the neglect whereof, though thou maiſt go to Heaven, will leſſen thy joy in thy journey?

6. And laſtly. But *how may generation worke be carried on, ſo as that God may be ſerved in the generation?*

In Anſwer heereto I ſhall lay downe ſome Rules for direction, and ſo conclude.

1. Labour *to find out what the worke of thy generation is, and in what things chiefly it conſiſts.*

A right principle and a rectified judgement muſt ever go before practice, or otherwiſe practiſe will be irregular.

Now for our helpe herein ſome light already hath been given in diſcuſſing the two former queſtions; which by obſerving *times and diſpenſations, ſearching the Scriptures, converſe with Saints, and ſeeking God*, that Chriſtian who deſires to be found in this *worke*, may for his own ſatisfaction adde unto; which *worke* as very needfull in this point, to the end he may go by his own eyes, and not by others, I heere commend to him, and leave him to.

2. Be *humbled for it in caſe thou haſt failed in the worke of the former generation.* It is (as hath been obſerved) Gods way to puniſh the errors of men in one *generation*, by blinding them to, and laying them by in the *worke* of another *generation*; which puniſhment in it ſelfe moſt ſad, hath yet a particular *diſpenſation* going along with it, exempting all ſuch from the penalty who for their failings in the former *generation*, have taken ſhame to themſelves, publiſhing their former errors, and humbling themſelves for it in the next *generation*, which you may read, Ezek. 43. 10, 11. *Son of man ſhew the houſe of Iſrael, that they may be aſhamed of their iniquities, and let them meaſure the patterne. And if they be aſhamed of*

all

all that they have done, ſhew them the forme of the houſe, and the faſhion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the commings in thereof, and all the formes thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the formes thereof, and all the lawes thereof: and write it in their ſight, that they may keepe the whole forme thereof, and all the Ordinances thereof, and do them.

The Law of Reprievall exempting the offendor from this heavy penalty of being *blinded* to, and *caſt out* of the *preſent worke* of God in the *generation* he lives in, is *conditional*, if they be *aſhamed*, then *ſhew them*- but in caſe they be not *aſhamed*, but ſtill juſtifie themſelves in, and own their former errors, then of neceſſity the contrary followes, *ſhew them not the preſent worke*, but rather let them be *blinded* to it, *hide from them the forme of the houſe, and the faſhion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the commings in thereof, and the Ordinances thereof, and the lawes thereof:* let all be hidden from them, and they laid by as to the whole, and every part of it, in caſe they be not *aſhamed*.

3. *Convert private cares which onely concerne thine owne particular condition, into cares for the publique, and the cauſe of Chriſt on foot.* Moſt of Gods people ſpend their time wholly in *caring* about their *condition*, whether it ſhall go well or ill with them as to their particulars;

making it no part (or at moſt but a little part) of their care how it fares with the *cauſe of God* in the world. Now as this *care* is too low for a *Saint* to be ever poring about, ſo is it one maine reaſon why after yeares of *care*, a diſſatisfaction ſtill remaines in their *Spirits* about the thing; becauſe they have not learn't to leave this *care* with God, and to *care* more for the *worke* of God and the glory of God.

Thus did *Moſes*, *Numb.* 14. The people are in a hurly-burly, and talke of making a new Captaine, *ver.* 4. and ſtoning ſuch as would diſſwade them, *ver.* 10. *Moſes* now in this tumult laies aſide the *care* of his *owne particular* ſafety, and makes it his utmoſt *care* to divert the wrath of God, that he now ſaw coming upon the people, as *ver.* 13, 14, &c.

And hath not Chriſt himſelfe left us a ſweet example of this, who when he was entring upon his great *worke* of dying, ſeemes to neglect his *own particular*, and makes it his great buſines to fortifie his Diſciples againſt the ſtorme approaching, by giving them a ſeale of his love in his laſt Supper, preaching a Sermon of Soule-conſolation to them, and alſo praying to his Father with much faith and fervency in their behalfe; and which is obſervable in his Sermon and prayer both, for one word ſpoken to himſelfe, and in his own behalfe, he ſpeakes hundreds to them, and to his Father in theirs. Admi-

Admirable is that of *Paul*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 11. who ſeemes to forget his *owne* ſalvation, that he might mind his *worke* whereto he was appointed, for he takes no more *thought* about that, but onely to leave it with God - *I know whom I have beleeved, and I am perſwaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him againſt that day:* as to ſay, I have truſted God with that, ile venture that upon his *care:* but in his *worke*, and for the *cauſe of Chriſt*, he ſuffers all things, and runs all hazards that he might be found faithfull thereunto-- *I am appointed, a preacher, and an Apoſtle, and a Teacher of the Gentiles. For the which cauſe, I alſo ſuffer theſe things*—

4. *Stand looſe and diſengaged from private intereſts. Private intereſt*, of honour, profit, friends, &c. hath oftimes been a ſnare to men, and ſlurred them in, yea ſometimes drawne them to oppoſe the *worke* of their *generation.* A *private intereſt* of profit (though coloured over with a pretence of ſacrifice) led *Saul* to the ſparing of *Agag*, and the beſt of the flock, contrary to the *worke* of his *generation*, which was to have *deſtroyed all*, as 1 *Sam.* 15. 2, 3. This proved a ſnare to him, and for this (as before) he is caſhiered by God.

It was a *private intereſt* of honour that made the Phariſees oppoſe Chriſt, becauſe the mul-

titude which before adored them as Gods, did now withdraw from them, and follow him, and ſo miſcarry in the *worke* of their *generation.*

It was a *private intereſt* of relations that made *Solomon* faulter ſo fouly in the *worke* of God in his dayes, his wives drawing him to idolatry.

It was a *private intereſt* of friendſhip with wicked men, becauſe great men; (*viz.* joyning with *Ahab* and *Ahaziah*) that brought the greateſt blur, and ſcourge to (that wee read of) upon good *Jehoſhaphat* in his dayes.

What ſhall I ſay more? It was *private intereſt* made the *Gadarens* ſend Chriſt away, becauſe they were loath to loſe their ſwine. *Private intereſt* of gain was the root of that great oppoſition made againſt the Goſpel in *Thyatira*, *Acts* 16. 19, 20. and after that at *Epheſus*, *Acts* 19. 23, 24, 25, &c. and *private intereſt* of honour and preeminence ſet *Diotrephes* on work to oppoſe *John* & the worke of Chriſt in his Churches, 3 *Epiſt. ver.* 9, 10. *Private intereſt* is an enemy to the *worke* of the *generation*, and every *worke* of God about it.

5. *Favour and owne the Saints of the generation:* and here by *Saints* I doe not meane this or that party of men, but ſuch men (of whatſoever partie they may be) as have *the image of God upon them, Chriſt, and the Spirit of Chriſt*

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in them to *disowne* any such one, though men call it *disowning* a Presbyter, *disowning* an Independent, *disowning* an Anabaptist, &c. yet Christ accounts it *disowning* his little ones.

In *Zech.* 12. 5. we have a glorious prophecy, relating unto the last *ages* of the world, but more particularly to that *age* in which the *Jewes* shall be *converted*, and it chiefly concernes *great ones*, Statesmen, the Governours of *Judah*, who in this day looking upon, and beholding Gods wonderfull appearances in behalfe of his *Saints* under their government, *owning* of them, shattering all that doe but lift up a hand against them to pieces, bringing all Plots and Counsells against them to nothing, they shall from hence be so powerfully convinced, that they shall say in their hearts, *The inhabitants of Jerusalem my strength* (or is our strength) *is the Lord of hostes their God.* And observe it, no sooner do they say thus, Surely these are Gods people, here lies our strength, we'l stick to these, but presently the *worke* in their hands goes on in despight of the most powerfull opposition, God making of them the terror of all the Nations round about them, yea of the whole world, which shall be *but as stubble to the fire before them*, as *ver.* 6. *In that day* (*viz.* the day in which the Governours of *Judah* shall thus speake) *will I make the Governours of Judah*

like a hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devoure all the people round about, on the right hand, and on the left.

A sad example of the contrary we have in *David*, who (though he were a man after Gods own heart, and one that had faithfully served God for many yeares in his *generation*, yet) by one injury offered to Godly *Uriah*, his hands were so weakned that (as I have formerly said) comparing after acts with what he did before, we hardly finde any remarkeable thing performed by him in his *generation* afterwards. As nothing doth more strengthen a mans hands in *generation worke*, then countenancing the *Saints*; so contrariwise nothing doth more enfeeble them, then to injure these.

6. *Keepe Justice alive against wilfull offenders in the worke.* *Achan* put a stop to the worke of the *generation* in his time, but *Justice* having free passage upon *Achan*, presently the *worke* of the *generation* goes on.

7. *Commit the managing of publique affaires into the hands of faithfull and holy men.* It is observable, and (but that I spare to run over againe the list of *generations*) I could for proof thereof produce many instances, that *generation worke* hath never thriven, but hath been alwayes done by halves or peecemeale, when the

the ſame hath been in the *hands* of ſuch men, who not being *faithfull* to God have more purſued their own *particular intereſts* of honour, profit, and the advancement of relations and alliances, then the good and welfare of the cauſe, and the furtherance of the *worke* of the *generation*. But that which is enough for our preſent purpoſe, is how that in the laſt dayes, particularly in that age, in which Chriſt will pitch a field with thoſe Kings of the Earth, which ſtand in the way of his Kingdome, he will pick and cull out, as the onely inſtruments that under him ſhall carry on this *worke*, ſuch as are called, and choſen, and faithfull; as, *Rev.* 17. 14. *The ſe ſhall make warre with the Lamb, and the Lamb ſhall overcome them: for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, and they that are with him are called, and choſen, and faithfull.* And alſo in that fatall blow which ſuddenly after ſhall be given to the *Romiſh* power, and the powers of the world conjoyn'd, his followers ſhall not be ſuch as either rowle in the pollutions of the world, or have ſtain'd their garments with the Idolatries and ſuperſtitions of Antichriſt, but onely ſuch as ſhall be cloathed in fine linnen, cleane and white, as, *Revel.* 19. 8. *And to her was granted that ſhee ſhould be arrayed in fine linnen, cleane and white: for the fine linnen is the righteouſneſs of the Saints.* And ver. 14.

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The Armies which were in Heaven followed him upon white Horſes, cloathed in fine linnen, white and clean. Though men may employ others, yet Chriſt will by degrees lay them by in the doing of this *worke* before the ſame ſhall be perfected.

8. Take *heed of divers things which if not prudently foreſeene and ſhunned, may any one of them ſlug even a good man in the work of his generation*, as

1. Take *heed of being offended.* Chriſts Country-men could not receive him for the Meſſiah, becauſe they were *offended* at his meanneſſe and poverty, *Matth.* 13. 57. Many a man *ſtumbles* at the *worke* of his *generation* by an apteneſſe to be *offended* at this and the other thing, as,

1. At the *new light of the generation.* As in the times before Chriſts coming and immediately after, ſo long as God was opening his will to his people by a written word, every *generation* almoſt did beame forth *new light*, in regard of being, *Abrahams generation* producing ſomewhat, that was not revealed in *Adams*, nor to the old world; *Moſeſſes* ſomewhat which was not revealed in *Abrahams*; *Davids* ſomewhat which was not revealed in *Moſeſſes*; *Iſaiahs* ſomewhat which was not revealed in *Davids*; *Daniels* ſomewhat which was not revealed in *Eſays*; *John Baptiſts*

Baptiſts ſomewhat which was not revealed in *Daniels*; and *Peter* and *Pauls* ſomewhat which was not revealed in *John Baptiſts* time: So in the *generations* ſince God hath cloſed up his word, (truth having brought forth its laſt in regard of being) and eſpecially ſince the man of Sin, (who creeping in, in the firſt *ages*, corrupted and darkned the *light* of thoſe times for many *generations* together) hath been going of the Stage, every *generation* almoſt hath afforded its *new light* in regard of diſcovery, of that *light* which in the word had being before, but obſcured by the fogs of Antichriſtianiſme. So *Wickliffe* and *John Hus* in their *ages* made diſcovery of ſome *light*; *Luther* in his *generation* of more; *Calvin* in his of more, in reſpect of ſome things wherein *Luther* was in the darke; and the *ages* ſince of more, in reſpect of ſome things wherein all the foregoing Worthies were in the darke. And this to ſay is no diſparagement to them, who did worthily in their *generations*, nor matter of *exaltation* to our ſelves who have nothing but free-grace to boaſt of, nor any other reaſon to give why it ſhould thus be, but this onely, ſo it pleaſed him.

Yet as then when truth came forth in being, *the new light of the generation* did oftentimes *offend* perſons living in thoſe *generations*, ſo as they could not ſee the *worke* of their

genera-

generations; as the perſecutions that many of the Prophets of the old Teſtament, and Apoſtles of the *new*, did ſuffer from the men of thoſe *generations* for the ſame doth witneſſe: So now when truth is coming forth in regard of diſcovery, the new diſcoveries of truth have been and are a continuall *offence* to the men of theſe laſt *generations*, even to the oppoſing the very *worke* of the *generation* they have lived in; as the ſufferings of thoſe witneſſes of Jeſus who ſtood up for the Prieſtly Office of Chriſt about *Luthers* dayes by the Papacy; and the perſecutions of thoſe worthies ſince who have maintained the Kingly Office of Chriſt by the Prelacy, and the ſeverall Nick-names of truth in this our *age*, and *new-light* the common by-word of the Country doth clearely and fully evidence.

2. At thoſe *ſtumbling blocks which uſually are laid in the worke of the generation.* It is a thing to be noted that almoſt in every *age* God hath laid ſome eminent *ſtumbling blocks* in the *worke* of that *age*, both for the triall of the *faith* of his own people in getting over them, and for his Enemies *to ſtumble* and *fall* upon; which *ſtumbling blocks* as they have exerciſed the *faith* of the one, ſo have they been continuall Rocks of *offence* unto the other. In *Noahs* time when the *worke* of that *age* was to expect and prepare for a univerſall Deluge,

luge, what a *ſtumbling block* (in reaſon may we thinke) was it to the old world to heare of ſuch a thing 120 yeares before it comes to look for it yeare after yeare 120 yeares together, and yet no appearance of ſuch a thing; might they not well conclude before halfe that time was expired, that *Noahs* preaching was a Fable, his building the *Arke* a fancy, for no ſuch thing as he expected would ever be?

Take Notice

When *Moſes* was ſent of God into *Ægypt* to deliver Gods people thence, which was the *worke* of that *age*, what a palpable *ſtumbling block* was it to *Pharaoh*, and the *Ægyptians* to behold the very ſame miracles which were wrought by *Moſes* to evidence his being ſent of God done by their owne Magicians: might they not well ſay, is this man ſent of God, then are our Magitians, for they do the ſame things as he.

Afterwards in the wilderneſs did not this lie as an apparent *ſtumbling block* before that *generation* that *Iſrael* ſhould there wander to and fro fortie yeares, till the whole *generation* of men that came out of *Egypt* were conſumed, before they muſt enter that Land they were brought out to poſſeſſe?

At the time of the building the ſecond Temple upon *Iſraels* coming out of *Babylon* (which being in the latter times of the *Jewiſh*

iſh State, was (I take it) the Type of Chriſts building his Church in the laſt dayes upon the coming out of Antichriſtian *Babylon*) what a *ſtumbling block* was it that the great *worke* of that time, the which they were come from *Babylon* about, ſhould receive ſuch a nip at the very beginning, as to be at a ſtand fortie yeares together before it could go on? might not Gods people feare, and enemies conclude this *worke* would ſurely now come to nothing? who will wonder that Temple building hath been at a ſtand for many years ſince the comming out of *Babylon* myſticall, that conſiders thus it was upon the coming out of literall *Babylon*, and their Temple was the Type of ours?

Chriſts coming into the world was accompanied with two notable *ſtumbling blocks*. Firſt, he was borne of *meane Parentage*, when as he was looked for amongſt the royall or Prieſtly ſeed. Secondly, He firſt *appeares out of Galilee*, and (by vulgar eſteeme) is a *Nazarene*, whereas all knew the Meſſiah was to come out of *Bethlehem*. Theſe two ſo viſible rocks of *offence*, as they drew the generalitie to oppoſe him, pleading againſt him and for themſelves, *Shall Chriſt come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture ſaid, that Chriſt cometh of the ſeed of David, and out of the Towne of Bethlehem where David was? Joh. 7. 41, 42.*

So

So were they ſore tryals to the *faith* of the godly, who not ſtrictly enquiring into Chriſts deſcent, and the place of his birth, but taking things upon truſt from report of the vulgar (a weakneſs too incident to many true meaning ſouls) made that their *ſtumbling blocke*, which rightly underſtood would have been a confirmation of their faith, as appears in that good plain-hearted *Nathanael*, who was without guile, could not tell how a while to get over this, *John* 1. 46. *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?*

And to ſay no more, when Chriſt ſent forth Apoſtles into the world about the great *worke* of that *generation*, did not this lie as a ſore *ſtumbling-blocke* before many to ſee the learned ones, the Doctors and Rabbies of the times ſet by, and in this glorious *worke*, a company of poor illiterate Fiſhermen emploid.

And as it is moſt evident, that in *generations* formerly, God for wiſe ends hath ever laid ſtumbling blocks in the *worke* of the *generations*: ſo he that ſhall but narrowly obſerve Gods *diſpenſations* towards his people of late in theſe our times, ſhall find this verified, nothing more; there having hardly been any great victory obtained, or any thing remarkable performed, which hath not had his *ſtumbling* going along with it,

and

and happy is he, whoſoever is not *offended* thereby.

3. At the *declared diſſents, or the pivate diſcontentents or murmurings of a religious party againſt the worke of the generation.* God in his ſecret providence, & unſearchable wiſdome hath ſo thought it good, that *generation work* ſhould meet with its affronts, not only from the tumultuous confuſed rabble of the world, but alſo from a religious party, who ſhould either *repine* at, *diſſent* from, or make *oppoſition* againſt the ſame. It was a *religious party* (the whole Congregation of *Iſrael* being a profeſſing people, amongſt which, undoubtedly very many that came out of *Ægypt*, were truly godly, who yet ſinned with the Congregation, and fell in the wilderneſſe) that in the days of *Moſes* did ſo heape up their *murmurings*, murmuring upon murmuring againſt the viſible *diſpenſations* of that *age*.

It was a *religious party*, yea and that too upon a *religious* ground (as well as a politick) *John* 11. 49, 50, 51, 52. that gave wicked counſell for the putting of Chriſt to death.

It was a *religious party*, the *Jewes* and devout women that raiſed perſecution at *Antioch* againſt the *worke* of the Goſpel, expelling *Paul* and *Barnabas* the *faithfull* Preachers ther[illegible] their coaſts, *Acts* 13. 50. A

religious

religious party have always had a finger in *oppoſing generation worke*; and obſerve, when a *religious party* hath *oppoſed*, this their *oppoſition* hath been ſo great an *offence*, that not only the common multitude, but right honeſt hearts have from hence ſtood aloofe from, and been ſhie of the *worke* of their *generation*. Chriſt could not be received of the *Jewes* for their *Meſſiah*, becauſe the *religious party* of the Prieſts and Phariſees did *oppoſe* him: and how great an *offence* was this to the poore ſimple meaning people, who but a little before ſeeing his *workes*, cryed out *Hoſanna*; being now by theſe men of credit poſſeſt that he was a deluder, they change their note, and cry *crucifie him, crucifie him*, as the ſtory tells us.

4. At the *after-miſcarriages and errours of thoſe who have been the only active inſtruments and lights at firſt, in the worke of the generation.* Tis matter of *offence* to not a few to ſee men *active* at firſt in the *worke* of their *generation*, prove afterwards retarders of the *worke*, and darkneſſe thence to ſpring whence the firſt *light* of the *generation* did ariſe: hence moſt are apt to call in queſtion the righteouſneſſe of that *cauſe*, and purity of that *light* which the firſt owners by future *miſcarriages* have caſt a *blemiſh* upon. Now though there ſeemeth in it to be juſt matter of jealouſie, yet

if ſeriouſly weighed & compared with foregoing Preſidents it is not ſo: for who knows not that *Solomon* was the firſt King of *Iſrael* that ever built a houſe for the true worſhip of God, and yet the firſt that ever built high places for Idolatry. *Peter* was the firſt Diſciple that publiquely confeſſed Chriſt, and yet the firſt that openly denyed him. *Judea* was the firſt place where Goſpel-light did ſhine, and from whence the world was enlightned, and yet the firſt place where errors ſprung up, and the light of the Goſpel darkned. *Act.* 15. 1. *Certaine men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, except ye be circumciſed after the manner of Moſes, yee cannot be ſaved.*

5. At the *gaſtly looke and untrodden footſteps of ſome particular diſpenſations and actings attending the worke of the generation.* In all *generations* almoſt there have been in managing the *worke* of the *generation* ſome *particular actings* which outwardly have had ſo foule an *aſpect*, that if not beheld with an eye ſeeing God his will and deſign therein, might juſtly breed *offence* and diſlike in the beholders. With how offenſive a countenance did that act look, and how may we think in reaſon might it tend to the hardning the Ægyptians, that *Iſrael* going out of *Ægypt*, pretending to worſhip God, ſhould by a cheat, (as

ſetting

ſetting Gods will aſide, mans reaſon would account it) plunder the Ægyptians of all their jewels and riches, a thing which if done without Gods ſpeciall command, had been contrary to morality.

And whether or no had not Gods command authorized *Joſhuah* thereunto, could that act of his in entring *Canaan*, and not only taking their Land from them, but alſo putting all the Inhabitants old and young to the ſword, been termed any other then an act of inhumane and barbarous cruelty?

Yea farther, let reaſon be judge of that act of *Jaels* in murdering *Siſera* at a time when his Maſter was in league with her Huſband, and when as he too (as a man flying for life) committed himſelfe to her for ſhelter, and what will it call the ſame but treacherous dealing, an act of perfidiouſneſs and higheſt injuſtice.

What need I multiply? let reaſon, not ſeeing Gods will, be judg of *Jehues* action, in putting the King his Maſter to death, and extirpating the Royal Family, and will it not brand the ſame with the odious names of diſloyalty, uſurpation and treachery to his Prince? which yet was an act commanded by God. God having ſo ordered it, that in all ages there ſhould ſtand in the *work* of the *generation* ſome ſuch facing and ſtaring acti-

ons as ſhould not only amuſe men, but alſo offend the eyes of the obſtinate, weak, or ignorant beholders.

2. Take *heed of being diſcouraged.* As *offences* on one hand hath put many a man by the *worke* of his *generation*, ſo have *diſcouragements* on the other hand put ſome by, and weakned the hands of others in the *worke*. Now there are ſeverall things at the which men are diſcouraged, whereof I ſhall particularize a few, as

1. At the *littleneſſe and lowneſſe of beginnings.* It is Gods way in the carrying on of his great and glorious works of wonder, ever to begin very *low*, and riſe *high* by degrees. I ſhall inſtance onely in two things, both appertaining to Chriſts Kingdome, and the rather becauſe (as hath been ſhewed) that is the *great worke of this age.*

1. The kingdom of Chriſt in his Churches, it is a moſt glorious work, yet *low in the beginning.* The building of the ſecond Temple, which (as hath been ſaid) was the type of this, had firſt *a day of ſmall things*, which lookers on were ready to deſpiſe. Zach. 4. 10. *Who hath deſpiſed the day of ſmall things?* before a day of great things. Firſt, a foundation ſtone is laid, and then *Zerubbabel* the builder hath his hands holden forty yeares, before he can lay a top-ſtone, or bring the work

work to perfection. The planting of Churches in the Primitive times, what a *low beginning* had it: one *Paul* and a few poor Fishermen acting in this *worke*, and that against all the world.

This is lively set forth in that Parable, *Matth.* 13. 31. *The Kingdome of heaven is like unto a graine of mustard-seede*-- It begins as a grain of mustard-seed, which is the least of all seeds, and of this but one grain, not many; yet in the end it grows a *Tree that the fowles of the heaven come to lodge in the branches of it.*

2. The kingdom of *Christ* over the world, the glory of this work is such, that when it shall be, the whole earth shall be full of the glory of it; yet *how little and low shall this worke be in the beginning.* It is at first *a stone cut out of the mountaines without hands*, little and weak, yet after *a great mountaine filling the whole earth*, Dan. 2. 34, 35. It is first a *little one*, after that a *thousand*, Isa 60. *ult. A little one shall become a thousand*--- It first begins in Sion, *i. e.* in the Churches, amongst a company of poor despised worshippers of Christ (whereof Sion was a type) *Psal.* 2. 6. *Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Sion.* Afterwards it spreads it self over all the world, *Vers.* 8, 9. *Aske of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt rule*

them with a rod of iron, thou ſhalt breake them in pieces like a potters veſſell.

Davids Kingdome (the moſt lively type of Chriſts Kingdom over the world) how *low* and ſeemingly unlikely ever to riſe, was it in the beginning. One *David*, a poore mans ſon, a keeper of ſheep to be a King, and yet his Kingdom at preſent in the hands of another, a powerful K. *Saul*, one choſen and annoynted by God, to whom the whole nation had ſubjected themſelves, and under whom they had obtained glorious victories. Who would ever have thought this Kingdome could have riſen, and yet it did?

Chriſts riding into *Jeruſalem* as King (which I take it did ſhadow out both theſe) it was upon an Aſſe, one of the moſt deſpicable of all the creatures; and yet not upon a grown Aſſe neither, an Aſſe in his full ſtrength, but upon a Colt, the foale of an Aſſe, the weakeſt and moſt deſpicable, of the moſt deſpicable, *Mat.* 21. 5.

Thus it is Gods way in great works (eſpecially in *generation worke*) to begin *low*, and *riſe* by ſteps. Now we ſhall find that *low beginnings* in the *worke* of the *generation*, have ſometimes been a *diſcouragement* to perſons acting therein. So in *Ezra's* time, when the foundation of the ſecond Temple was laid, the low & *little beginnings* did ſo *diſcou-*

rage

rage the ancient men who had ſeen the glory of the former houſe, that it is ſaid *they wept with a loud voyce*, Chap. 3. 12.

2. At *the powerfulneſſe and ſucceſsfulneſſe of oppoſition againſt the worke.* As *generation-work* hath never wanted *powerfull oppoſition*, ſo ſometimes *oppoſition* for a while hath been *ſucceſſefull* againſt the ſame. What *powerfull oppoſition* ſhall be made againſt the worke of God in the laſt times, *viz.* the ſetting up Chriſt as King in Sion, or his Churches you have foretold, *Pſal.* 2. where we have *oppoſers* of a higher note, *Kings, Rulers*; *oppoſers* of a *lower* ranke, *heathen people.* Yet all, *Prince* and *Beggar* can joyn hand in hand to *oppoſe* Chriſts Kingdom.

And how *ſucceſſeful* that *oppoſition* made by the adverſaries of *Judah* was to the *worke* of the *generation* in the dayes of *Ezra*, whereby a ſtop was put to the *worke* for many yeares together is there recorded. And which is to be noted, the very *oppoſition* made by *Judah's* Enemies to the *worke*, was that which did exceedingly *diſcourage* and weaken the hands of them that wrought therein. *Ezra* 4. 4. *Then the people of the land weakned the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in the building.*

3. At *Great ones holding off, and with-drawing their hands from the worke. Generation work*

hath ſeldome found the friendſhip of *great ones*; *Have any of the chiefe Rulers or Phariſees believed in him?*

In *Nehemiah's* time the onely men that would not put their necks to the *worke* of that *age* were the *Noble-men.* Chap. 3. 5. *Their Nobles put not their necke to the worke of their Lord.* Now what a *diſcouragement* it is to the meaner ſort to ſee the *great ones* ſtand off, or with draw, who knows not?

It is obſervable, which I would not here paſſe over, that in that *age* in which the *Iews* ſhall be brought in, Gods firſt glorious appearing ſhall be amongſt a middle ſort of people. *Zech.* 12. 7. *The Lord ſhall ſave the tents of Iudah firſt*-- *i. e.* God ſhall firſt begin to diſcover his glorious power, and make bare his arme of ſalvation, not amongſt the pooreſt of all, who have no tents, no place of habitation, but are Vagrants and beggars; nor the richeſt, who have their ſumptuous Palaces, and royal houſes; but a middle ſort of people, living in a plain, but an honourable and comely way, ſuch as the way of living in Tents of old was; and the reaſon hereof is given, that *the glory of the houſe of David, and the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, do not magnifie themſelves againſt Iudah, i. e.* that men of Princely and noble blood, dwelling in Courts, or ſumptuous Palaces, or depending

ing upon such places, may not (as hath been the manner from the beginning) magnifie themselves against others, because in a ranke or ranks below them. If this shall be the way of Gods *dispensations* towards that *age*, be not *discouraged*, in case we now who are fallen into the same, see many *great ones* withdrawing their hands from the *work*.

4. At *the perfidious and treacherous dealing of some particular persons employd in the worke*. It is no new thing in *generation worke* as to meet with *opposition* abroad, so *treachery* neerer home. *David* in his *worke* had a treacherous sonne *Absolom*, a treacherous Counsellor *Achitophel*. *Nehemiah* in the carrying on of his *worke* had a *treacherous Shemaiah*, yea *treacherous* Nobles acting with him, as *Chap.* 6. 10. 17. Christ in his *worke* had a *treacherous Judas* for one of his followers.

And what a *discouragement*, *treachery* in some is to others, that one instance of *Absoloms treachery* is proof enough, which did so sinke the heart of *David* himselfe, and the hearts of all his mighty men of valour, yea of the whole Country, that *they fled weeping with a loud voice from Absolom*, 2 *Sam.* 15. 23. 30.

5. At *the meeting with disappointments*. *Disappointments* of expectations prove oft times *discouragements*, at best disquietments to those

that meet with them in their *worke*. A *diſappointment* did ſo diſhearten bold ſpirited *Jeremie*, that he took up a haſty reſolution to quit his hands of Gods work, *Chap.* 20. 7, 8, 9. Yea *Paul* himſelfe (though a man ſo watchfull active, and having ſuch command over his Spirit, as none more) was ſo diſquieted by a *diſappointment* (and one would think it a ſmall one too, only miſſing of *Titus*) that he loſt a very faire opportunity of doing Chriſt ſervice at *Troas*, 2 Cor. 2. 12, 13.

6. At *unkindneſſes received from thoſe whoſe good and welfare we have ever cloſely purſued in the worke.* It is a remarkable example, and pertinent to the thing in hand, that of *Moſes*, Exod. 17. who having (as an inſtrument under God) brought *Iſrael* out of Ægypt, carried them through the Red Sea; yea made it his buſineſſe from firſt to laſt above any thing of his own to ſeek their good and welfare, meeting with ſo *unkind* a return (for all his tender care of them) as that no ſooner did they want a little water, but preſently they fall to chide with, and upbraid him, as men ready to ſtone him, *verſ.* 2, 3, 4. He is ſo *diſcouraged* hereby, as that this very *diſcouragement* puſheth him into that ſinne againſt the *worke* of this *generation*, for which and no other he is ſhut out of *Canaan*, as

compare

compare *verſ.* 7. with *Numb.* 20. 12, 13.

7. At *multiplied ſentences of death put upon the work*; This though it wil take in ſome of the foregoing *diſcouragements*, which are but as ſo many *ſentences of death* put upon the *work*: Yet becauſe it may be extended farther, I ſhall here allow it a particular place by it ſelfe.

The more grace and mercy is wrapped up in any of Gods *diſpenſations* towards his people, the more and greater *ſentences of death* are uſually put upon that *worke* which thoſe *diſpenſations* call for, and by which this mercy is to be uſhered in. The *diſpenſation* of God towards *Iſrael*, in bringing them out of Ægypt, was a *diſpenſation* full of mercy, and nothing more verified in the ſtory of it then this that multiplyed *ſentences of death* did attend the work. Before deliverance comes, they are in *hard bondage*; when deliverance was neer, their *bondage grows higher*, and their tale of bricks is *doubled*. No ſooner are they come out of *Ægypt*, but they are inſtantly at *deaths doore*, being ſurrounded (as it were) with *deſtruction*; a *Sea* is before them, *Rockes* impaſſable of either ſide, an hoaſt of *armed men* behind them, coming purpoſely to *deſtroy* them. No ſooner is this danger over, but *wanting bread*, the whole Congregation is ready to famiſh with hunger; and this

no

no ſooner paſt, but they *want water*, and are all at the point of *periſhing* for thirſt: and by that time this was over, *Amalek* a warlike Nation engageth them (who had never ſeen Warre) in the open wilderneſſe. God had great mercy, mercy upon mercy for *Iſrael*, and here were great *ſentences of death*, *ſentence of death* upon *ſentence of death* attending them, as they were in the way to it.

Now that which was the miſery, and indeed the very undoing of this people, was, that inſtead of *beleeving*, when a *ſentence of death* was over them, they were *diſcouraged* thereby, and ſtreight way began to *murmure*, which *murmuring* of theirs in the end coſt them *deare*, as the ſtory will tell us.

But the principall thing in my aime is this, which is worth our obſervation, *viz. That it was a meer diſcouragement occaſioned by a ſentence of death put upon the worke of the generation, through the evill report brought home by thoſe ſpies ſent to view the land of Canaan, which was the fatall Rocke whereupon the whole nation of ſix hundred thouſand men, and upwards (Caleb and Joſhuah excepted) did ſuffer ſhipwrack*, as will appear by comparing *Numb.* 13. 32. with *Chap.* 14. 1, 2. 28, 29, 30. A leſſon for thoſe to think of, who giving way to their *diſcouragements*, when a *ſentence of death* is upon Chriſts cauſe, do flinch from the *worke* of Chriſt in theſe dayes.

3. Take

3. Take heed *of envy againſt ſuch whom God employs in the worke of the generation.* Envy againſt inſtruments employd by God in *generation worke* was a part of *Iſraels* ſinne, for which they fell in the wilderneſſe, as *Pſal.* 106. 16. *They envied Moſes in the campe, and Aaron the Saint of God.* Meer *envie* againſt Chriſt drew the Prieſts and people in Chriſts time to reject him, and ſin againſt the *worke* of the *generation*, Matth. 27. 18. Mar 15. 10.

Envy

Envie of perſons *employd* in the *worke* hath oft times raiſed oppoſition to the *worke* it ſelfe of the *generation*: That worke, which if done by ſome ſhould have found approbation, is therefore diſpleaſing, becauſe done by others. As ſaid a Popiſh Cardinall in *Luthers* time: *A reformation indeed is needfull, and to be wiſhed, but that* Luther *a raſcall Frier ſhould be the man ſhould doe it. this is intollerable.*

4. Take heed *of procraſtinating that worke which is the buſineſſe of the preſent generation, under a pretence that the time of doing of it is not yet come, neither are things ripe for it.* This was the fault of thoſe in *Haggais* time (for which they are ſharply reproved for it) who did *put off* the worke of the building of Gods houſe, under pretence *the time was not come*, *Hag.* 1. 2. This people ſay the time is not come, the time that the Lords houſe ſhould be built.

5. Take

5. Take heed *of limiting God to Ordinaries.* My meaning is, in caſe *ordinary* means for the carrying on of the *worke* be wanting, and cannot be had, take heed you do not ſo bind up God to theſe, as thereupon to deſert the *worke.* In *generation worke* God in all *ages* hath allowed himſelfe a latitude in *working,* not tying himſelf to *Ordinaries.* Now when God walks in a way of *extraordinaries,* it is not only lawfull, but a *duty* in caſe *ordinaries* faile to believe for *extraordinaries.*

It was an *extraordinary* thing to *believe* that the bare *ſtriking* of a Rock ſhould fetch out water thence, enough to ſupply a million of people ready to die for thirſt: Yet becauſe *Moſes* & *Aaron* in an *age* wherein God walked in a way of *extraordinaries,* did not *believe,* for this their *unbeliefe* is ſeverely puniſhed, *Numb.* 20. 10, 11, 12.

2. Take heed *of neglecting the nicke of opportunity that God puts into thy hands to doe the worke of thy generation in.* There is a day, and a *nick of opportunity* which God lets ſome perſons have to ſerve their *generations* in; which if let ſlip, they are gone (as to Gods uſing of them any more) and that paſt recovery.

Eſter had a *nicke of opportunity,* which had ſhee ſlipped, though deliverance ſhould have ariſen to Gods people another way, yet ſhee and her Fathers houſe had been deſtroyed.

There

There was *a Nick of opportunity* that *Iſrael* had to enter *Canaan* upon the return of the Spies, which had they embraced the doore ſtood open for them, but they neglecting it (though it were in a haſty fit, and a thing which preſently too they recanted, wiſhing they had never done it) the doore is ſhut, and now it is too late to repent it, for their carkieſes muſt fall in the wildernes. Take heed of looſing *the nick of opportunity* wherein thou maiſt act for God, leſt afterwards when perhaps act thou wouldſt, God will not own thee in his *worke*.

7. Take heed *of forecaſting events, but do thy worke, and leave events to God.* *Jonas* by *forecaſting events*, that God was gratious, and would therefore ſpare *Nineveh*, and then he ſhould be eſteemed a falſe Prophet, runs from the *work* of his *generation*, Jon. 4. 2.

8. Take heed of *ſetling thy ſelfe upon ſeeming Godly and righteous principles when theſe claſh with the worke of the generation.* Many men looke no farther then this, in caſe they have a *principle* which ſeemes *juſt* and *pious*, they thinke that will beare them out what ever they do. But had not *Caiaphas* ſo, when he was Lord-chiefe Juſtice in counſelling and contriving the moſt notorious bloudy deſigne that ever ſaw light? What more *righteous* and *ſeemingly godly principle* then this, that

one

one man ſhould dye to ſave the lives of a whole Nation? yet this *principle* ſo *juſt*, ſo *pious* to an eye of reaſon was the Foſter-father of that moſt curſed nefarious act (I meane as acted by them) of putting Chriſt to death.

And heere to adde an inſtance or two more borrowed of a worthy ſervant of Chriſt in theſe our dayes, becauſe fitly applicable to the thing in hand. What more *righteous principle* then this, that it belongs to the chiefe Ruler of a Nation, to ſee to the profit and glory of that Nation? Yet *Pharaoh* ſetling himſelfe upon this *righteous principle*, onely evill as it did croſſe the *worke* of that *generation*, to the end his Realm might receive no detriment by letting *Iſrael* go, whoſe continuance in that bondage was ſo much for their advantage, he and his periſh in their *principles*, being led by theſe to act againſt the *worke* of their *generation*. So what more *prudent* and *juſt principle* then this, that it is not meet to let a potent enemy into the bowels of a Nation? yet *Sihon* King of the *Amorites* upon this *principle* oppoſing *Iſrael*, at the time in which God was leading them into *Canaan*, he and all his people periſh by it. Take heed of doing all that thou conceits thou haſt

Mr *Owens* Sermon preached befor the Parliament *October* 24. 1651. being the Publique Thankeſgiving for our *Worceſter* deliverance.

haſt a *principle*, will beare thee out in doing.

9. Take heed *of lending an Eare unto ſuch friendly reſpectfull offers, which carry in the bowels of them (though guilded over with outward reſpect and friendſhip) a crafty deſigne againſt the worke of the generation.* As *generation worke* hath never wanted a party who have by open force *oppoſed* the ſame: ſo likewiſe there hath moſtly been a party attending of it who by ſecret fraud and pretences of *friendſhip* have ſought to undermine it, which latter have oftimes proſpered in their deſignes (through the over-much credulity of perſons employd in *generation-worke*) when and where the firſt have failed.

Was it not a very *faire offer* of *Moab*, (when otherwiſe they could not have their wills upon *Iſrael*, then) to come and in a friendly way to call and invite the people to their houſes, and to grant to them (though ſtrangers and men of different *Principles*) liberty to worſhip with them? What a large *ſhew of reſpect* and curteſie was here? And yet no other but a meer *crafty deſigne* to draw *Iſrael* to ſin, by which (when no other way they could do it) they drew the *wrath of God* upon *Iſrael*, Numb. 25.

So was it not a very *faire* Petition of *Adonijah*, 1 Kings 2. 16, 17. to aske *Abiſhag* the

Shunammite to wife; a thing one would think no man could have blamed; yet *Solomon* ſpies out a *crafty deſigne* laid in this ſmooth Petition, which was to get the Kingdome, and conſequently to put by the great *worke* of that *generation*, viz. *the building of the Temple, which Solomon was appointed unto.*

So likewiſe what a *friendly motion* and ſeemingly full of *dutifull reſpect* and *obedience* was that of *Shemajah* to *Nehemiah*, Chap. 6. 10. wherein no other thing is pretended but the diſcovery of a dangerous plot in the hatching, and tender reſpect to the ſafeguard of his perſon, and yet this no other but a *crafty deſigne*, to draw *Nehemiah* to ſin, and to bring a ſlurre upon him, in mannaging the *work* of his *generation*, ver. 13.

To ſay no more, what could be in outward appearance a more *friendly offer* then that of *Judahs* adverſaries, *Ezra* 4. 2. to come and freely proffer their helpe, and to joyne with *Judah* in the carrying on that great *worke* of Temple-building, which was the *worke* of that *age?* yea and to do this at ſuch a time when the *worke* was deſpiſed, and had lien dead many yeares, the inſtruments employd in it few and weake, ſo that laying all things together, one would judge that there could be nothing in their hearts more then good will to the *worke* and deſire the ſame

ſhould

ſhould proſper; when as yet there was no thing in all this faire ſhew but a *crafty deſigne* lying at the bottome of it to obſtruct this work of God; as *ver.* 4, 5, 6.

10. Take *heed of making reaſon of State the rule of publique actings.* Jeroboams *reaſon of State* made *Jehu* performe by halves the *work* of his *generation*; deſtroying the houſe and image of *Baal*, but winking at the Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*. This *reaſon of State* was that which led a grave wiſe Counſell into a moſt curſed practice, *viz.* the voting the Son of God to death, *John* 11.47. to the 54. The reſults of pure *reaſon of State*, are ofttimes dangerous, moſt times contrary to the *work* of the *generation.*

11. Take heed *of ſetting up humane Lawes above the worke of the generation.* My meaning is, in caſe theſe two come in competition rather to chooſe neglect in the *work of the generation*, then in any way to be offenſive to humane Lawes.

If the commands of God himſelfe, and the ſpeciall acts of his worſhip are to give place (as hath been before proved) to the *worke of the generation*, then ſurely without any want of that due reſpect that is and ought to be given to mans Law, it may be ſaid, and alſo without offence that humane Laws are much more to ſtoop and fall downe to it; the au-

thority of God being above that of man.

In *Esthers* time there was a Law in the Kingdome of *Abasuerus*, and the foundation of it was no other but the priviledge and honour of the supreme Magistrate, that whosoever man or woman should come in unto the King in the inner Court, except such to whom the King should hold out the golden Scepter, hee should be put to death, *Chap.* 4. 11. Which Law in it selfe was not evill, as it was meerly Politick, respecting onely the honour, State, and priviledge of the King: Yet when the Cause and people of God lay at such a plunge, that without intrenching upon this Law, Gods cause in that *age* must have fell to the ground; *Esther* though uncalled by the King, yea more having no other command from God (as formerly hath been shewen) but onely the visible *Call* of a *dispensation*, pusheth upon the Pikes of the Law, and runs the hazard of the perill of death, and how wonderfully God did stand by her, and preserve her in so doing, the issue of this her dangerous attempt recorded in the History may sufficiently informe us.

12. And Lastly. Take heed *of conjunction with such who are not reall hearted to the cause of God, and the worke of the generation.* When *Israel* went up out of *Ægypt* a mixed multitude of *Ægyptians* and others that were not *Israelites*

lites went up with them, *Exod.* 12. 38. Which mixed multitude did afterwards prove a ſnare to them, even in the very *worke of the generation*, by drawing the Congregation to murmur againſt the Lord, *Num.* 11. 4. *And the mixt multitude that was amongſt them fell a-luſting, and the Children of Iſrael alſo wept again, and ſaid, who ſhall give us fleſh to eate?*

What need I relate that which every one knowes, how godly *Aſa* loſt himſelfe by his league with *Benhadad* King of *Syria*, and good *Jehoſhaphat* by his compliance with *Ahab* and *Ahaziah*. And although it be true that the examples of the Kings of *Judah* are not in all things patternes for States and Kingdomes in Goſpel-dayes to walk by: yet the reaſon upon which the Seer reproves *Aſa* becauſe he relied upon the King of *Aſſyria*, and not on the Lord, falls as ſtrongly upon profeſſing States under the Goſpel, as it did on him: who ſhall I hope be kept both from his Sin, and ſo from his reproofe; Which he ſhall continue to pray for, who is a friend to *Sions* proſperity, and alſo *Englands* welfare and intereſt, which is and will be found ſoly depending on it. *They ſhall proſper that love thee, Pſal.* 122. 6. Amen.

A Table

Mordecay. Walter
his Booke, Anno,
Domini. 1661:
Dated the
2. day of
November —
by mee Mordecay
Walter Amen

A Table of the chiefe things contained in this Treatiſe.

THe Coherence of the words, with the explition of the Text. Page 1. to 5.

Doct. *It is an eſpecial duty lying upon the Saints to attend unto, and be active in the work or workes of their generation.* 5

Shewed,

1. *What generation worke is, and how the ſame is different from thoſe common duties which lie upon Saints as Saints, and the ſpeciall duties of a Saints calling, ſtation, relation, or preſent condition.* 7, 8

2. *That Saints in their ſeveral generations have ever had their peculiar workes; as is prooved, by a line drawne through the ſeverall generations from the beginning dawnwards unto our times.* p. 14. to 20

3. *That it is a matter of great concernment for a Saint to attend to the worke of his generation, as appeares*

1. *God by his diſpenſations calls alond for it.* p. 21, 22

2. Gene-

2. *Generation worke is of all others the greateſt worke, and a neglect herein the greateſt ſin.* p. 23. to 30

3. *In doing the worke of our generation wee are moſt ſerviceable to the deſigne of God that is on foote in this age wee live in.* p. 30, 31

4. *God hath choice diſtinguiſhing mercy for that man that follows him in the worke of his generation,* as,

1. *God will overlooke many failings in that man.* p. 32

2. *God will ſtand by that man and never leave him.* ibid.

3. *God will owne that man in caſe hee live thereto in the worke of the next generation.* p. 33

4. *God will provide a hiding place for that man againſt thoſe ſtormes which may fall upon the generation hee lives in, that is active in the worke of his generation.* ibid.

5. *God will reveale his ſecrets to ſuch.* p. 34.

6. *God hath peculiar honour wherewith he will crown ſuch.* p. 35

5. *Neglect of generation worke expoſeth a man to many dangers;* as,

1. *Danger of loſing Gifts and Talents.* p. 36

2. *Danger of loſing Communion with God.* ib.

3. *Of being laid aſide by God.* p. 38

4. *Of ſtumbling at the worke of the generation,*

on, and all the diſpenſations of God about it. p. 40

5. Of being blinded in, or ſhut out of the worke of the next generation in caſe he ſhould live to ſee it. p. 41

6. Of becoming an Apoſtate, and an open enemie to the truths of God. p. 43

4. Wherein lies the worke of the preſent generation, which is reſolved,

1. By laying downe of ſome generall Rules ſerving to diſcover what the worke of the generation is, in whatſoever age or generation a Saint may be ſuppoſed to live in; which Rules are theſe,

1. Bee inquiſitive to finde out (according to Scripture account) the particular age or generation it ſelfe, that it is fallen to thy lot to live in. p. 46

2. Adde to this, a narrow and impartial ſearch for diſcovery of thoſe glorious and remarkeable things, the accompliſhment of which God in his word hath promiſed and foretold, in and about this age. ibid.

3. Obſerve Gods viſible diſpenſations towards the age, and the various tranſactions of things therein, how they anſwer to what is foretold and promiſed. ibid.

4. Obſerve what worke that is which is moſt oppoſed and raged againſt by Satan and wicked men in the generation. p. 48

5. Obſerve what the moſt ſpirituall enlightned Saints

Saints have upon their hearts, as the worke of the generations. ibid.

6. *And Lastly, Bee much in prayer to God for light herein.* p. 48

2. *By application of these generall Rules unto the present age.* p. 48. to the 71

5. *How may each one finde out that part of the worke which is properly his worke, and God calls upon him to be active in.*

1. *Observe what part of generation worke that is, that thou art in a capacity to do.* p. 75

2. *Observe what worke that is amongst those things thou art in a capacity to do in thy generation, which the dispensations of God without, and the bent or inclination of thy Spirit within, at such time as the same is most spirituall, or thou hast most intimate communion with God, calls for the present doing thereof.* p. 77

3. *Observe what piece of generation worke that is, which when thou hast ventured on it, thou hast found God most eminently appearing to thee for thy encouragement, and also with thee for assistance in doing of it.* p. 79

4. *Observe what piece of generation worke that is, which thou being in a capacity to do, in doing of art likely to meet with greatest opposition, and that from all hands.* ibid.

5. *Observe what piece of generation work that is, which when thou hast had a Call, an opportunitie,*

nitie, and an inclination to do it, and hast not set about the same, God hath presently withdrawne himselfe. p. 80

6. Observe what piece of generation work that is, which putting case thou wert to die, would make most for thy comfort if done, and most for thy discomfort if neglected. ibid.

6. And Lastly. How may generation worke be so carried on, so as that God may be served in the generation?

1. Labour to finde out what the worke of thy generation is, and in what things chiefly it consists. p. 81

2. Be humbled for it in case thou hast failed in the worke of the former generation. p. 82

3. Convert private cares which onely concerne thine owne particular condition, into cares for the publique, and the cause of Christ on foot. p. 83

4. Stand loose and disengaged from private interests. p. 85

5. Favour and own the Saints of the generation. p. 86

6. Keepe Justice alive against wilfull offenders in the worke. p. 88

7. Commit the mannaging of publique affaires into the hands of faithfull and holy men. ibid.

8. Take heed of such things as will obstruct and hinder the worke of the generation; as,

1. Take

1. *Take heed of being offended.*

1. *At the new light of the generation.* p. 90
2. *At thoſe ſtumbling blocks which are uſually laid in the worke of the generation.* p. 92
3. *At the declared diſſents, the private diſcontents or murmurings of a religious partie againſt the worke of the generation.* p. 96
4. *At the after-miſcarriages and errors of thoſe who have been the onely active inſtruments and lights at firſt in the workes of the generation.* p. 97
5. *At the gaſtly looks and untrodden footſteps of ſome particular diſpenſations and actings attending the worke of the generation.* p. 98

2. *Take heed of being diſcouraged,*

1. *At the littleneſs and lowneſs of beginnings.* p. 100
2. *At the powerfulneſs and ſucceſsfullneſs of oppoſition againſt the worke.* p. 103
3. *At great ones holding of, and withdrawing their hands from the worke.* ibid.
4. *At the perfidious and treacherous dealing of ſome particular perſons employd in the work.* p. 105
5. *At the meeting with diſappointments.* ibid.
6. *At unkindneſſes received from thoſe whoſe good and wellfare wee have ever cloſely purſued in the worke.* p. 106
7. *At multiplyed ſentences of death put upon the worke.* p. 107

3. *Take*

3. *Take heed of envie againſt ſuch whom God employeth in the worke,* p. 109
4. *Take heed of procraſtinating that work which is the buſineſſe of the preſent generation, under a pretence that the time of doing of it, is not yet come, neither are things ripe for it.* ibid.
5. *Take heed of limitting God to ordinaries.* p. 110
6. *Take heed of neglecting the nick of opportunitie that God puts into thy hands to do the work of thy generation in.* ibid.
7. *Take heed of forecaſting events.* p. 111
8. *Take heed of ſetling thy ſelfe upon ſeeming Godly and righteous principles, when theſe claſh with the worke of the generation.* ibid.
9. *Take heed of Lending an Eare unto ſuch friendly reſpectfull offers, which carry in the Bowells of them (though guilded over with outward reſpect and friendſhip) a crafty deſigne againſt the worke of the generation.* p. 113
10. *Take heed of making reaſon of State the the rule of publiche actings.* p. 115
11. *Take heed of ſetting up humane Lawes above the worke of the Generation.* ibid.
12. *And Laſtly. Take heed of conjunction with ſuch who are not reall-hearted to the cauſe of God, and the worke of the Generation.* p. 116

FINIS.